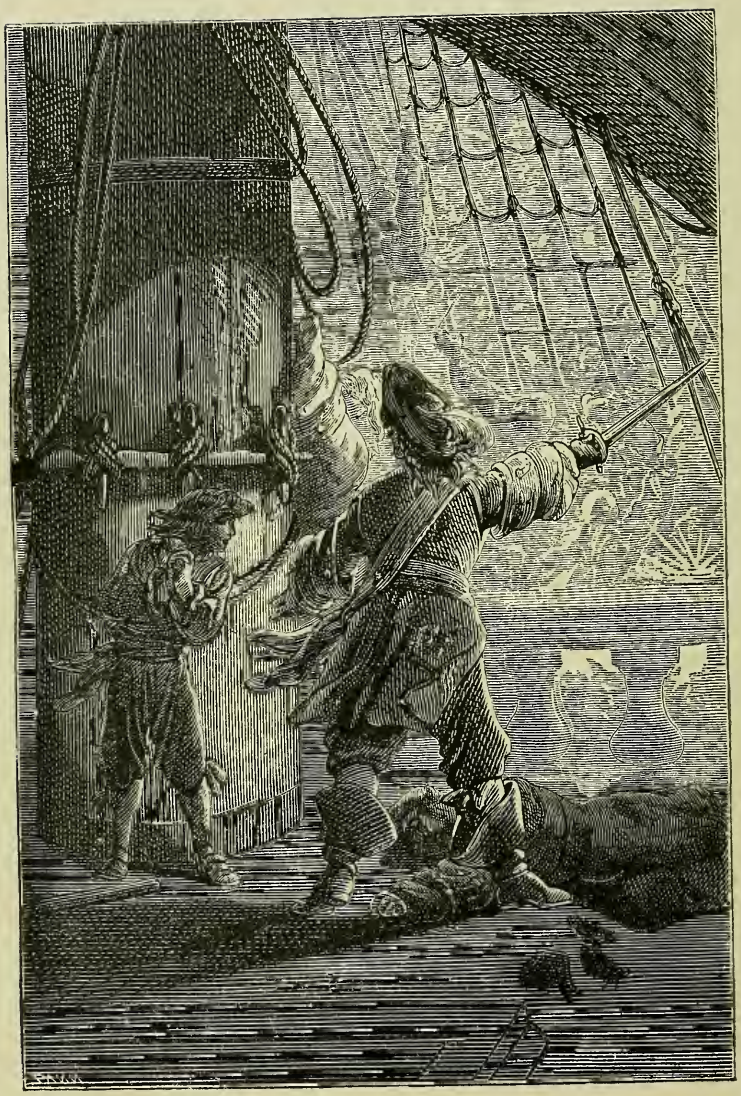
JEAN BART
BY
F. KOENIG

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. JC52 Copyright No.

Shelf .B3R6

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



"Untie me, father, I am not afraid now!"—p. 132.

JEAN BART

BY

FREDERICK KOENIG

F CONGRESS,
RIGHT
APR 10 1890
2241
NGTON.

PHILADELPHIA
1890

DC 52
.B3R6

COPYRIGHT 1890,
BY
H. L. KILNER & Co.

12-36641

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Infancy of Jean Bart—His Father, Cornille Bart, and Michael Jacobsen, called the Fox of the Sea, ... 5

CHAPTER II.

First Experience of Jean Bart at Sea—He transports Three French Lords from Calais to the Dutch Fleet, ... 36

CHAPTER III.

Jean Bart serves under De Ruyter—His First Combat with the English, ... 60

CHAPTER IV.

Jean Bart and his Sailor, Gaspard Keyser—His Return to Dunkirk—His First Captures as Privateer—The Principal Privateers of Dunkirk, ... 83

CHAPTER V.

JEAN BART IN HIS OWN HOME—HIS WIFE, HIS CHILDREN, HIS COUSIN, THE PASTOR OF DRINKAM, ... 103

CHAPTER VI.

JEAN BART IS APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF A FRIGATE WITH THE TITLE OF LIEUTENANT—HIS BATTLE ON BOARD LA RAILLEUSE—THE MANNER IN WHICH HE OVERCAME HIS SON'S FEAR—COMMENCEMENT OF HIS CRUISES IN THE NORTH SEA—THE CHEVALIER FORBIN—COMBAT WITH THE ENGLISH—JEAN BART AND FORBIN ARE MADE PRISONERS—THEIR ESCAPE, . 124

CHAPTER VII.

JEAN BART IS APPOINTED CAPTAIN OF A FRIGATE, AND COMMANDS A SQUADRON—HIS MOST REMARKABLE EXPLOITS—HIS VISIT TO THE COURT—THE MEANS HE PROPOSED TO PREVENT THE PRINCE DE CONTI FROM BEING TAKEN PRISONER—LAST CRUISE OF JEAN BART—HIS DEATH, ... 149

JEAN BART.

Translated from the French.

CHAPTER I.

INFANCY OF JEAN BART—HIS FATHER, CORNILLE BART, AND MICHAEL JACOBSEN, CALLED THE FOX OF THE SEA.

ON June 27, 1662, the city of Dunkirk celebrated by a joyful festival, its definitive reunion to France in virtue of the new treaty concluded between Louis XIV. and Charles II., King of England. The royal standard of France had been hoisted upon the principal edifices of the city, and saluted by the artillery from the forts ; the vessels in port were decorated, and their cannons replied to the batteries on shore. The

bells of all the churches rang merrily, and the celebrated chimes of St. Eloi pealed their most melodious strains. Fireworks illuminated the public squares, and numerous bands of sailors paraded the streets, chanting gay refrains mingled with the cries of, "Long live the King! Long live France! Down with the English!"

Leaving the populace of Dunkirk to these joyful manifestations, we will visit a small house situated in that part of Church Street nearest the parish then so renowned for its marvellous chimes.

This house, like nearly all of that period, was of irregular form, with high and narrow arched windows ornamented with a trellis-work of lead. The date of its construction was marked in iron figures on the façade. The outer door of the house is open; let us enter the corridor, cross a small room serving as an ante-chamber, and raising a heavy tapestry portière, penetrate into the principal apartment, and we shall presently make the acquaintance of the three persons there present.

The walls of the room which had dark-

colored, projecting rafters were hung with thick Spanish leather, showing here and there traces of old gilding. At the lower end of this vast apartment stood a large, massive bedstead; four small walnut columns, black from age, supported the dais and the curtains, composed of a tapestry similar to the portière, and in designs of variegated red and yellow.

A few large chairs and a fauteuil of the same material, two chests of carved ebony, surmounted by several large Japanese vases completed the furniture of this apartment, which was tiled with china flags of various colors, and dimly lighted by one high window, long and narrow, with small lozenge-shaped panes of glass framed in gratings of lead. The sun's declining rays passing through the thick foliage of ivy and hop which shaded the pointed arch of the window, threw a large belt of golden light upon the panes of glass, while the other parts of the apartment remained in obscurity, making a charming picture for admirers of the Rembrandt school.

Three persons, as we have said, occupied

this apartment. One was a woman of thirty-eight or forty years, but apparently more aged, for sorrow and solicitude had withered her beauty; her long mourning garments and the widow's veil thrown over her head, sufficiently explained the sadness which overshadowed her. She was seated in the fauteuil; against one of the arms leaned a boy of ten or twelve years, with long, light curls, blue eyes, and expressive countenance. He was clothed in a simple vest, woollen breeches, and hose.

This woman was Catherine Jaussen, widow of Master Cornille Bart, who, when living, was one of the most noted privateers or corsair captains of Dunkirk. The child was their son, *Jean Bart.*

The third person in this scene was a gray-haired, seafaring man, thin visaged, sunburned, and of medium stature; he wore a doublet of Aumale blue serge fastened with pewter buttons upon which was an anchor in relief; heavy Flemish hose completed his costume. This man was Jacques Seyrac, a native of Bayonne, and surnamed *Hareng-Sauret,* Red-Herring, after his emi-

gration to the north. He obtained this sobriquet from his old condition of herring-fisherman which he at first pursued at Dunkirk, but which he abandoned to attach himself to the fortunes of Cornille Bart, and to accompany him in his cruises against the English and the Dutch. *Hareng-Sauret*, or simply *Sauret*, as he was called, was a brave and honest sailor, and somewhat *learned*, for, an extraordinary thing at that period, he could read fluently, write tolerably, and keep accounts. He was proud of his knowledge, which gave him a certain superiority over his comrades; and he took advantage of it sometimes to carry his point and impose on them, his opinion; he was of scrupulous integrity, of tried intrepidity, and of unbounded devotion to his captain, Cornille Bart. After the death of Cornille, he transferred to his widow and her son, the devoted attachment which he had felt for his old master; on their side, Dame Bart and the little Jean had the most entire confidence in him, and regarded him as one of their family. By degrees, he had become the *factotum* of the house, the counsellor of the

mother, and the preceptor of the child; for although he attended the classes of the Minim Fathers, Master Sauret pretended that he alone had taught him to read and write. The fact is the pupil was much more pleased with his method than with that of the good Fathers, and if he often yawned over their instructions, he listened to those of Master Sauret with the strictest attention; because the latter interspersed his teaching with marvellous accounts of seafaring men, narratives of voyages, and of combats on the ocean which excited to the highest degree the boy's interest. He early taught him to know every part of a ship, as well as the complicated nomenclature of the ropes, sails, and rigging, and all terms used in the maritime vocabulary. This was in his opinion, the most essential part of the education of his "young gentleman," as he habitually called his pupil.

It was not however in accordance with the mother's judgment: not that she desired for her son any other condition than that of a sailor; for he was in a manner destined

from his birth to the sea; but she desired that he should devote more time to his classical studies, instead of passing nearly every day on the wharf or in the rigging of the vessels.

This was her only cause of dissatisfaction with Master Sauret, whom she reproached with being too indulgent and too disposed to excuse his pupil's caprices. One of these little family altercations had just taken place at the moment which we have selected to introduce the reader to the foregoing personages. The occasion was a rather perilous trip that Jean had chosen to take in the morning with two small ship-boys belonging to a Dutch boat, venturing on the open sea in a frail craft which had been nearly wrecked in returning.

"Yes, mistress," Sauret answered in reply to the mother's reproaches, "when our young gentleman left with his comrades the sea was calm, and there was not the least danger in taking a row in the harbor, especially, as he is already as skilful in handling and guiding a skiff as any sailor in the port. But suddenly a furious wind arose, the sea

became heavy and threatening. I hastened with Louis Perthus and Pierre Bonchet to the pier; we were about to embark in a canoe to meet our young gentleman, when we noticed him bravely manœuvring his boat, which seemed to fly over the top of the waves, and which soon darted into the channel like an arrow and then quietly rested alongside the Dutch vessel to which she belonged. More than a hundred sailors and a number of citizens saw and applauded the manœuvre, and, recognizing our young gentleman, pronounced him to be the worthy son of Captain Cornille Bart, and said that he would not degenerate from his brave father! Notice, mistress, what honor our young gentleman has reflected on you at Dunkirk; I assure you, it is talked of from Furness to Effarinchoque."

"You understand, my dear mother," said Jean, embracing her tenderly, "that I ran no danger; besides, must I not make an apprenticeship of my trade of sailor? In this I only follow my father's will, who, when I was but six or seven years of age, taught me to swim in the sea, and often

said to me : ' I wish to accustom you early to the ocean, that under all circumstances you may preserve your presence of mind, and never let fear overcome you ; it is the most certain means to save you from great perils.' I have experienced this to-day, for if I tell you that I was not in danger, it was because I kept my presence of mind ; had I been as terrified as my two companions, it would have been impossible for me to govern our bark, and we probably would have been lost."

"It does not become me, my son," answered the widow, "I, the daughter, sister, and wife of sailors, to blame you for following your father's counsel, or to prevent you from early pursuing the noble trade to which you are destined ; like him, I would tell you that on all dangerous occasions, you must cast aside fear, which would deprive you of the use of your faculties, and I would add that to succeed, it is necessary above all to implore the assistance of God, and to place yourself under the protection of His holy Mother, Star of the Sea, the powerful patroness of mariners. But I

blame you for exposing yourself to danger unnecessarily, as you have done to-day; that is to tempt God and to disobey your mother."

Jean did not reply; he hung his head in confusion, thus silently acknowledging that he was wrong.

"Oh! good mistress," said Sauret, "do not reprove too strongly; I should take my share of the reproaches which you address to the young gentleman. Do not change the joy of this beautiful day into sadness. Do you not hear the merry chimes, the salutes of artillery, the joyous acclamations of the populace, jubilant at being delivered from the domination of our masters beyond the sea?"

"Alas! my poor Sauret," the widow replied with tearful voice, "my days of happiness and joy have passed. Undoubtedly, I did not hear with indifference the news which rejoiced the city; but immediately my memory turned to four years ago, and I thought, since this was to occur, why was it not done at that time? It would have been a great consolation for my poor

husband to die, as he wished, on French soil. I believe that his death was hastened by the grief of hearing that the French, after conquering the city, had ceded it to the English."

"What you say is but too true, mistress," Sauret returned, much moved; "he often said to me in his last illness: 'My friend, if I recover, I will return to Dieppe, my native place, where I have many relatives on the paternal side. I no longer wish to live in Dunkirk, now that it belongs to England. That is worse than being under Spanish rule: I did not love those haughty dons, but they were loyal to their sovereign, whilst the English beheaded their king."

"Then my father," said Jean, "hardly loved the English?"

"Certainly not. He owes to them the greatest misfortunes of his life, the death of his father, and the loss of a large fortune."

"Oh! tell me, my good Sauret, about the death of my grandfather and of his friend, the *Fox of the Sea:* you witnessed the combat, and I know that your attachment to my father dates from that time and that

you were ever afterwards faithful to him. I have heard portions of this history related, but none of the details.

"With our mistress' permission, I will gladly gratify you."

"Certainly I grant it: the examples of courage and devotedness given by his father and grandfather cannot fail to be useful lessons for my son; I will listen with deep interest to your account which will recall," she added with a sigh, "one of the most brilliant feats of arms in which my poor husband was engaged."

"Then I begin," replied Sauret: "There was at Dunkirk some years previous, a celebrated rover called Michael Jacobsen, surnamed the *Fox of the Sea*, because no one was so skilful in evading or escaping an enemy, or in enticing and alluring his prey. This Jacobsen was the brother-in-arms, the sailor of your grandfather, Antoine Bart; they had sworn and proved for each other an unbounded friendship, one of those strong friendships of the olden times, not in words, but active as you will soon see. You have, perhaps, noticed the portrait of

Jacobsen, at the house of the alderman, Mulwert, painted by the famous artist of Cologne, Rubens, who remained a long time as ambassador from the Catholic King near Charles I., King of England.* Well! this artist, who had the retinue of a great lord, regarded it as the highest honor to paint old Fox of the Sea, on account of his adventurous intrepidity, and for this purpose, Rubens went every day to Jacobsen, who lodged in a small and modest retreat near the old Risban. When he had finished the portrait, he would not receive any remuneration from the alderman, not

* Philip IV., King of Spain, wishing to end the differences which had arisen between the crowns of England and of Spain, and aware of the intimacy existing between Rubens and the Duke of Buckingham, favorite of Charles I., induced Rubens to visit Madrid, in 1627. Philip IV. received him with much distinction, and conceived a high opinion of him. When he had passed eighteen months at the court of Spain, the King sent him with instructions and credentials to the King of England. Rubens was graciously welcomed by Charles I., who was painted by him; during these sittings, Rubens explained the different clauses of his mission, and, at the expiration of two months of conferences, the basis of the treaty was arranged to the satisfaction of both parties.

even a fine chain of the gold of Ophir; he delicately refused saying: 'I am sufficiently recompensed, since it can be said that Rubens painted the portrait of Jacobsen.'"

"Oh!" cried Jean, "I remember the portrait, that of a dark man with high features, black hair and mustache, armed with a steel corslet, crossed by a red scarf; in his right hand he holds his baton of command, the other rests on a handsome, bright helmet. In the distance are ships, a battle, and a storm."

"That is correct; you have attentively examined the portrait; but, to return to the original and to your grandfather: the following event occurred the first year that I engaged as a simple sailor on board the *Sea Swallow*, a pretty brigantine of which your grandfather was captain and proprietor.

"It was during the war with the English, who blockaded the port; fortunately we had returned three days previously with your grandfather and father; our brigantine was anchored in the harbor ready for cruising, the crew on board, and everything prepared for sailing. It was a winter even-

ing, the wind blew furiously from the northwest; your grandfather, his friend, Master Wandervelde, the privateer captain, your father and myself were in this room comfortably seated near a good fire, smoking Rotterdam tobacco, and drinking English ale.

"We were talking by the fireside of war and sea perils, when the door suddenly opened, and Fox of the Sea entered, enveloped in a large cloak, dripping with water, for the rain poured in torrents. Under his mantle Jacobsen was fully armed.

"'Antoine,' he said to your grandfather, looking him full in the face. 'I need you, your son, your crew, and your brig.'

"'When?' inquired Antoine Bart.

"'This very hour and to go to sea,' replied the Fox.

"Your grandfather excused himself to his guest, Wandervelde, sent a valet with him, and said to Jacobsen:

"'Smoke a pipe, drink a pot of beer, and dry yourself whilst we are arming.'

"Such, Monsieur Jean, was the friendship of sailors in those days; the Fox of the

Sea would have done for your grandfather what your grandfather did for him without demanding a reason.

"Jacobsen threw his mantle over an andiron and stretched to the fire his huge fisherman's boots, which reached to his belt.

"I well remember his appearance. He wore an old buff jacket, and a rusty corselet of steel. He lighted his pipe, and we left to make our preparations. When we had armed and descended we found the Fox very pensive, looking steadily at the fire and so absorbed in his reflections that his pipe was extinguished and he did not notice our entrance.

"'Well, Michael,' cheerfully said your grandfather, touching the Fox on his shoulder, 'Well, shall we not at once depart for the sea?'

"Jacobsen shuddered and replied, 'Yes, yes, let us depart.' But stopping suddenly, he added gravely, addressing your grandfather:

"'Tell me, Antoine, how is it with your soul? Could you, without dread appear before God at this moment?'

"Your grandfather saw at once that he designed for us a dangerous and probably a rash enterprise. He replied to Jacobsen :

"'Since it is thus, Michael, as the door of the parish chapel remains open, we will pray there before we embark, asking pardon of God for our sins, and begging His mercy, which He will surely grant us.'

"We went out well protected, for the northwest wind was terrible and the rain cut our faces as sharply as hail; we all made our devotions in the parish chapel. Whilst we were in prayer suddenly there entered the sanctuary a priest who had just taken holy viaticum to a dying person. It was the venerable Abbé Joos, of Bergues, who for a long time had been chaplain of the Navy and was well known to Master Jacobsen and your grandfather.

"'This is providential,' said Master Antoine Bart to his friend, 'we can confess.'

"'I fear,' answered the Fox, 'that we have not time ; we must profit by the high sea and get under way. You know the tide waits for no man.'

"'We will go speak to him,' rejoined

Master Antoine; 'he will at least give us his benediction, and perhaps absolution under condition.'

"They immediately went to the Sacristy to await the priest when he left the altar. In a few words they explained everything to him. The worthy ecclesiastic reflected a moment, then, as a man who had suddenly resolved, he gently said,

"'In truth, my dear friends, from this until the flow of the tide I shall not have time to confess all four; but I can do better than give you the absolution which you demand: I will accompany you on board, where I can hear, not only your confession, but those of the crew, who, in so critical a moment would like to reconcile themselves to God; then at an early hour to-morrow morning I will celebrate mass and give Holy Communion to such as desire it.'

"'It is a good and happy thought, Father,' said Master Antoine; 'but I have known you long and from you the proposition does not astonish me.'

"'But you do not know to what you engage this venerable priest,' quickly

interrupted Jacobsen; 'and I decidedly oppose it, because we shall certainly have a severe combat to sustain, and as it will be impossible to land him before the engagement, I cannot conscientiously lead him into a danger of which we cannot foresee the consequences.'

"'Oh! let your conscience be perfectly tranquil on this account,' Abbé Joos smilingly answered. "My resolution has not been lightly formed, I assure you, and if anything could strengthen it, it is precisely what you now mention. Even if I had the opportunity to return before the battle, I would refuse to avail myself of it; may there not be wounded to console, or perhaps the dying to encourage in their last agony? You understand, my friends, that duty calls me to be with you, and the greater the danger the more necessary my presence. This is decided; let us go, do not lose a moment. I will procure from the Sacristy the necessary articles, will follow you immediately, and I shall arrive at the quay as soon as you.'

"They did not insist, as you may sup-

pose. We left at once and at eleven o'clock were at the port. We found all on board from the pilot to the cabin-boy, as was always your grandfather's order upon the *Sea-Swallow*, and the order was wisely given and rigidly enforced.

"As soon as we touched the deck, the boatswain's mate raised anchor: during this manœuvre the Abbé Joos arrived with a small package under his arm and descended to the cabin. Jacobsen had an order from the high constable of the admiralty to open the chain which closes the entrance of the port: at midnight we were in the canal and shortly at sea. The wind was north-northwest, blowing by squalls; Jacobsen, under whose command your grandfather had placed the brig, ordered the pilot to ply to the windward, and to extinguish the fires. The night continued rainy and very dark; occasionally between two heavy waves could be seen in the distance the watchlights of the cruising vessels dotted here and there like small stars, for they dared not approach the coast. Our skilful pilot, who was from Flessingue,

seemed to pierce through the darkness, and commanded the helmsman by means of whistles which they exchanged. Jacobsen ordered the cutlasses, battle-axes and the spontoons to be brought on deck and directed the men to arm, in order to be ready at daybreak for whatever might occur; at the same time he advised those who desired to confess and receive absolution to go below where a priest was in waiting. Nearly all accepted the invitation, but in a certain order, so as to leave a sufficient number to manœuvre the vessel.

"I went in my turn with your grandfather and Master Antoine, and I noticed that your grandfather prayed long and fervently; after rising and blessing himself, he gave his benediction to his son as if he had been on his death-bed. Then addressing me, he said in a grave tone, calling me by my right name, which rarely happened;

"'Jacques Seyrac, promise me before God to remain always the faithful sailor of Cornille Bart, my son, and to defend him on all occasions even at the peril of your life?'

"'Yes, master,' I answered, 'I promise before God, Who hears me.'

"'And you, Cornille Bart,' he continued, addressing his son, 'do you promise before God, to be always the faithful sailor of Jacques Seyrac, here present, and to defend him with all your power, even at the peril of your life?'

"'Yes, father,' replied Cornille, 'I promise it before God."

"'Now, my children,' pursued the old captain, 'join hands, and may God bless your association as I myself bless it; in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

"'Amen,' we simultaneously replied.

"During this scene, which did not last as long as I have taken in telling it, your grandfather was much affected, and your father and myself were equally so. Master Antoine was the first to recover, and in a moment said in his ordinary voice, and even cheerfully:

"'Come, children, it is time to go above and watch the wind.'

"We returned to the deck and we

observed that the brig was still beating about."

"But where were you going, Master Sauret?" demanded Jean Bart, impatient to hear the end of the nocturnal excursion.

"Where were we going? God and Jacobsen alone knew at that moment; as he had said nothing to your grandfather, your grandfather could not, and would not ask: 'Where are you taking us, Michael?'

"We continued in this manner all night under three small sails, on account of the squalls; by constantly tacking we had made but little headway at day-dawn. Jacobsen remained at the stern, moved impatiently, stamping on the deck with his heavy fisherman's boots, and twirling a boarding-pike in his hand as if it had been a switch; your grandfather was near him, awaiting his orders.

"When it became light, which was late because of the rain, Fox of the Sea ordered our flag to be hoisted at the stern, and directed the ordnance officer to fire a culverin without balls from the prow. Neither Master Antoine, your father nor

myself understood this manœuvre, which might attract to us the attention of all the cruisers; but we noticed it without remarking upon it to each other.

"A half hour had passed when a sailor on the lookout at the maintop cried:

"'I see two large ramberges and a smaller one coming towards us.'

"Would you believe, Monsieur Jean, that news which should have daunted Fox of the Sea, made his courage rise, and casting his boarding-pike on the deck, he exclaimed: 'At last they come! Here they are!' as joyously as if he held one of the richest galleons of the King of Spain, which had surrendered at the first broadside! It was only then he informed your grandfather that he had received the governor's orders to attract the cruisers as far out as possible from the environs of the port, in order to enable a large convoy from the North to enter unmolested, intelligence of its approach having been signaled the previous evening. The Fox of the Sea called for our brig as his own was undergoing repairs.

"'Antoine,' said the Fox to your grand-

father, 'we must combat our English enemy without truce or mercy, and to turn their attention from the convoy, we must fight to the death.'

"Your grandfather having answered for himself, your father, and for me that we were ready to give our lives for the service of God and the king, Fox of the Sea addressed the crew in his own manner. The brave Jacobsen inspired such blind confidence that every sailor swore to be faithful unto death.

"Abbé Joos celebrated mass, your grandfather, father, myself, and the greater part of the crew received Holy Communion. After the ceremony, Jacobsen ordered a cask of brandy to be brought on deck; every man drank to the king's health, and the artillery-men besmeared their faces with powder steeped in the liquor which gave them a frightfully ferocious appearance.

"The ramberges bore upon us with all sails set. The Fox directed our pilot to hoist sail and change our course towards the nearest of the enemies: it was a sloop not

quite as strong as our brig. We poured two broadsides into her keel and she sank. The two large frigates which followed her opened so formidable a fire on the *Sea-Swallow*, that our poor *Swallow* was dismasted and half the crew killed or wounded. But, Master Jean, what glory! what a defence! Alone against three vessels, alone, we had destroyed one and the other two hardly dared approach us, we fought with such determined fury to the cries of 'Long live the king.' We were as if intoxicated; brandishing our battle-axes, we shouted to the English: 'Board us, board at once!'"

Master Sauret repeated these last words with the same exultation which doubtless animated him during this terrible event. Jean was as much excited as the old mariner; his cheeks were inflamed, his nostrils inflated, and his eyes sparkling like stars.

"Go on," he cried; "did the English reply to your provocation?"

"Certainly; being thus challenged, they would have been the greatest cowards not to have answered; and, I assure you

the English do not lack courage. They boarded us from the two ramberges, at the same time, on both sides of our vessel; it was a bloody and terrible melée. Battle-axe in hand, cutlass on wrist, the contest was man to man. But the two vessels of the enemy could replace immediately their killed and wounded, whilst only a small number of men remained to us and they were all wounded. Jacobsen had received a gun-shot in the body; your grandfather, three wounds, of which one at least, was mortal; your father and myself were but slightly hurt; our deck was covered with the dead and dying. The Fox, seeing none able to combat longer, seeing the stern of the brig crushed by the cannon-balls, and sinking, called out with strong voice in spite of his wounds:

"'My friends, we have but one chance left; fire the powder! fire the powder! and by God's mercy, they shall not take us alive!'

"I still see Master Jacobsen; no longer able to use his weapon, he was clinging with all his weight to an English officer to make

him share his fate. More than a hundred Englishmen were on our deck, and the Fox continued the cry: '*Fire the powder! Fire the powder!*' Who executed this order, how it was executed, I never knew; all I remember is that Cornille and I, both wounded, were on the quarter-deck, defending ourselves against two or three red-coats, when I suddenly felt a terrible shock and lost all consciousness. The freshness of the water into which I had fallen restored me to my senses, and I found myself mechanically holding to a wreck. I saw the English in boats picking up the shipwrecked, and I was received on one of them. How great was my astonishment and my joy to find there Master Cornille Bart, your father! He extended his hand, sadly smiling, and said:

"'Here you are, my poor Sauret! I thank God for sending me this consolation in my misfortune.'

"'And your father?' I anxiously enquired.

"'He is dead.'

"'And Master Jacobsen?'

"'He is dead.'

"'And Abbé Joos?'

"'He is dead, and all our crew, with the exception of the two sailors whom you see yonder, grievously wounded, and ourselves.'

"That, Master Jean, was the result of this frightful combat; of our fine crew there remained only four men more or less lamed, and of our brig, a few planks, the sport of the waves. True, the enemy had suffered more in proportion than ourselves; besides the sloop that we had sunk in the commencement of the attack, one of the frigates had caught fire by the explosion of our brig, and had also exploded; the other was nearly disabled, and she hastened to gather the débris of the wrecks to proceed to some English port for repairs.

"The object of our expedition had been completely accomplished. During the combat, the convoy entered Dunkirk and the English, finding the place so amply supplied with provisions, abandoned the blockade. We were taken to England and held as prisoners until the following year, when peace was declared.

"From that time, under no circumstances of good or bad fortune, did your father and I separate. When he afterwards became my commander, my captain, I always remained his faithful sailor, and off duty, he treated me as a friend and brother. On the day of his marriage he presented me to his bride—I am sure our mistress has not forgotten it,—as his best friend, his brother in arms."

"No, no, Master Sauret, I do not forget it, and you well know that I have always regarded you as a member of the family."

"That is true, and I cannot sufficiently thank you for your kindness."

"And I," exclaimed Jean Bart, "wish you to be my sailor, as you were my father's."

"That is too great an honor for me, young master; and yet, notwithstanding the difference of our ages, the idea may be realized, and there is a good foundation for it, because, on my part, I love you as I loved your deceased father, and I believe that you have inherited his affection for me."

"Yes, my good Sauret," cried Jean Bart, enthusiastically, "you shall be my sailor, and I will be yours; and as soon as I have the strength, we will avenge the death of my father and grandfather. Oh! the English!" he added with an indescribable expression of anger and hatred.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST EXPERIENCE OF JEAN BART AT SEA—HE TRANSPORTS THREE FRENCH LORDS FROM CALAIS TO THE DUTCH FLEET.

WITH such dispositions, such remembrances, apart from the instructions of Master Sauret and the example and encouragement given him by the numerous and brave mariners of Dunkirk, all old friends and comrades of his father, it is not surprising that the young Jean Bart made rapid progress in the study and practice of everything appertaining to sea service. At twelve years of age, he embarked as cabin boy for a long voyage on a vessel which was to transport colonists to Canada. Returning from this voyage he was employed on a small boat, alternately engaged in fishing and trading expeditions, under the command of Jerome Valbué, one of the most expert seamen of

his time, but reputed to be passionate and hot-headed. He remained four years with this captain, passing and re-passing between Flessingue and the coasts of England and Ireland, besides making several cruises in the North Sea and the Baltic.

Valbué had constructed a *caravelle*,* so remarkable as a fast sailer, that the Count de Charost, Governor of Picardy, purchased it to run as a packet boat between France and England, and gave the command of it to Master Valbué, who had just been appointed royal pilot, and had fixed his residence at the small port of Saint-Paul, situated on the coast about five leagues from Calais.

In 1666, France having made an alliance with Holland, declared war against England. By the treaty concluded between the countries, the French fleet commanded by the Duke de Beaufort, was to unite with the Dutch fleet, but, although circumstances prevented the junction, the

* A *caravelle* was a small vessel equipped as a galley, having a square stern, lateen sails, a fast-sailing boat and easily worked.

Dutch fleet, under Admiral Ruyter, attacked the English fleet June 12, and after an engagement of three hours, gained a decisive victory, and forced the enemy to seek refuge in the Thames.

After the declaration of war, the caravelle of Master Valbué was used as a coast guard, and the morning after the battle of June 12, it commenced cruising in the Straits of Dover for the purpose of announcing the approach of English vessels, or their passage, should they leave their roadstead, or in fine, to pilot into the port of Calais such Dutch vessels as might be too disabled to gain one of their own ports.

The crew of the caravelle was composed of Master Valbué, a pilot, his mate, the young Jean Bart, eight sailors, among whom was our old acquaintance, Jacques Serrac, called Sauret, and a ship boy.

Jean Bart was not quite seventeen years of age, and yet he fulfilled all his duties as mate, with the care and skill of an old seaman. He was so changed in appearance that only a mother could have recognized in him the fair boy of former years, with

rosy cheeks and light curls, whom we saw listening intently to the narrative of the battles of the Fox of the Sea. During the four years which had intervened, his features had become larger and more decided; he was now a robust lad, rather tall, careless and brave in manner, browned by the sea breezes, and deriving from his broad shoulders an air of extraordinary vigor; his blue eyes were still clear and piercing, but the long, light curls which his mother loved to caress, had been so frequently cut, that the broad forehead of her son was covered with short, thick hair as stiff as bristles. He wore a long blue jacket, a scarlet doublet, with small silver buttons, and wide breeches of white linen, fastened to the doublet with two Spanish piastres, which served as buttons.

The old Sauret, who for eight years had never left *his young gentleman*, as he still styled him,—the old Sauret had but slightly changed. His hair was whiter, his step less elastic, in all else he was the same; devoted unto death to the son of Master Cornille Bart, and loving more than ever to recount

his adventures at sea, with such embellishments and exaggerations as recalled his Gascon origin.

At the moment we meet our old acquaintances, the caravelle, on which they had embarked, was under light sail, cruising about two leagues distant from Calais.

The sky was cloudless, a soft breeze from the southeast rippled a calm sea shaded green and azure, but gently swaying with the waves, which flowed into this narrow and deep passage.

The sails of the vessel were so disposed as to receive the wind from the left; to the right, in the distant horizon, appeared the coast of England, delineated hazy and blue against the clear, pure sky, and, at the eastern extremity of this line, stretched the high, white downs, sparkling like silvered mountains. To the left of the caravelle were readily distinguished the lands of France, the lofty steeple of Calais, its long yellow sands, its bare, reddish cliffs, relieved of their monotony only by an occasional mill or an isolated tree.

After cruising for about a half hour, Mas-

ter Valbué put about; he relinquished the helm to Jean Bart, mounted the quarter-deck, and taking the telescope attentively explored the horizon.

"Come," he said after a long examination, "I am like Sister Anne, I see nothing. Direct the prow to Saint-Paul," he added addressing Jean Bart; "we will return to the harbor, where I have been ordered by the governor to await some noblemen of the court and convey them to-night to the Dutch fleet."

Jean Bart, standing on the stern, where he was proudly guiding the helm, executed the master's order. Valbué, who closely watched the manner in which his young assistant steered, said in his harsh voice:

"Well done, my child, well done; continue as you have begun and I answer for it that before two years, the admiralty of Calais will not refuse you the commission of head-coaster between Bayonne and Dunkirk."

They were scarcely a league distant from Saint-Paul, when a large ramberge, which they had noticed some time previous,

hoisted the Dutch flag and signalled for a pilot.

"Ah! that concerns me," said Master Valbué; "yonder vessel is one of those which suffered in yesterday's battle, and it is now going to Calais for repairs. Change your route, my boy, and we will go help the disabled boat to reach the port."

Jean Bart immediately steered towards the ramberge, and in less than a half hour they were within speaking distance. The nearer they approached, the more clearly they discovered the serious injury which had been sustained by the sails and rigging. Having accosted the captain, Master Valbué ascended the deck, and after a short conversation, he said to Jean Bart:

"Take the boat back to Saint-Paul and direct the crew to be ready to put to sea with the rising tide. Should I not return in time to meet the gentlemen whom I expect, you must conduct them to their destination."

"I will do my best, Master Valbué, to execute your orders." Resuming immediately the route to Saint-Paul, he arrived

there about five o'clock in the evening.

After having moored his boat in the little cove, which Sauret said served him as a *coach-house*, Jean Bart left it in care of the boatswain and accompanied Sauret to a small, well-built house situated on an elevation which commanded the port of Saint-Paul and the sea: it was the residence of the royal pilot, Valbué, where he and Jean Bart occasionally slept when their duties allowed them to pass the night on land.

Sauret prepared the supper, for he was cook when circumstances required it, and, after partaking of the frugal meal, Jean Bart mounted a terrace adjoining the house; resting his elbows upon the parapet, and smoking his pipe, he gazed upon the sea, which spread out before him in all its immensity. For some time he appeared absorbed in the thoughts inspired by the sublime spectacle, when he was suddenly aroused from his reverie by the arrival of Sauret who said to him in an excited manner:

"May God pardon me the word, those hateful noblemen of whom Valbué spoke, have come; I see them approaching, escorted by the innkeeper of the *Ancrede Misericorde*.

"Well, is there anything astonishing in that? Did you not expect them?"

"I do not know why, but I felt convinced they would not arrive this evening, and I hoped that we could enjoy at least one night's rest on land."

"You can remain, dear Sauret, and sleep quietly; the weather is so fine that we shall be able to work the boat with the number now on board."

"I! I remain when you leave!" exclaimed Sauret, wounded by the supposition; "Oh! no, sir, that cannot be, as you well know. If I spoke of a quiet night on land, it was not for myself, who sleep better on the deck of a vessel than in the finest bed; it was on your account; you are too young to be exposed to all the hardships of sea-life."

"Holy Cross! my dear old Sauret, do you take me for a child, and . . . ."

The discussion was ended by a loud knock at the door of the house.

"Ah!" cried Jean Bart, "I suppose our gentlemen have arrived. I do not know if they are great lords, but they knock as if they were the masters here."

In the mean time Sauret had hastened to open the door, and he admitted two finely dressed gentlemen, who advanced haughtily, hat on head and with a disdainful manner.

"Young man," said one of them to Jean, "I understand that you are the mate of Master Valbué?"

"Yes, sir."

"How does it happen that this Valbué, who has the honor of being a royal pilot, and who, as such, received from the Governor of Calais the order to await the Marquis de Cavoye, whom you now see, the Chevalier de Coislin, who is at the hotel, and myself, the Chevalier d'Harcourt, in order to conduct us in his caravelle to the reefs of Harwich where we are to meet the Dutch squadron, how, I ask, does it happen that he did not remain here till we came?

Do you know that, by such a failure in duty, he is running a great risk?"

"Master Valbué," replied Jean Bart with imperturbable sang froid, and without appearing in the least impressed by the great airs and tone assumed by these personages, "Master Valbué is a royal pilot certainly, and, holding that position, he knows his duties and fulfils them. If he did not await you, it is because a disabled man-of-war claimed his services to pilot it into the harbor of Calais. A pilot, gentlemen, is like a priest or physician; if there is danger and they say to him: 'come,' he must go through darkness, storm, or tempest. That is his first duty, and Master Valbué accomplished his. He did not, however, disregard the order of the governor, for he directed me to bring his caravelle here, and, should you come before his return, to conduct you to the Dutch fleet."

"You!" exclaimed Cavoye, in astonishment.

"I!" answered Jean Bart, with an assurance and composure which astounded the two gentlemen.

"Come, Cavoye," said D'Harcourt, "the child talks nonsense; our better plan will be to despatch a messenger to Mr. de Charost to inform him of the mischance; he will arrange to procure us another pilot as speedily as possible."

"Just as you please, gentlemen," replied Jean Bart carelessly, whilst he relighted his pipe at the flame of the candle held by Sauret, "I shall have an undisturbed sleep to-night; Sauret, conduct these gentlemen through the passage which is as dark as the hold of a three-decker."

Cavoye and D'Harcourt exchanged glances as if consulting each other.

Jean Bart, noticing their indecision, said, as he continued to smoke his pipe:

"Listen, gentlemen; although you do not seem to have confidence in me, I will give you a friendly advice by which you can profit or not as suits you: if you miss the tide, the full moon, and the wind we now have to go out from port, you may wait a long time without finding so favorable an opportunity; whereas with the present south wind and the moonlight as bright as

day, in two hours we shall have doubled Cape Blanet, in twelve hours we shall be in sight of the Nord Foreland, and, once there, we shall soon, God willing, find the fleet of the United Provinces, which is at anchor off Harwich. I could go there as an ass to the mill, for I have a hundred times traversed these anchorages when going to the coast of Suffolk."

"You appear to have some knowledge of navigation," said D'Harcourt, hesitating; "but you are so young, my boy, and to entrust to you the safety of our persons!"

"Ah! ah! you *people of the land* regard mariners as master mast-makers do small rafters; the young sink the vessel. Well, gentlemen, remain if you choose; and if such be your decision, I will go to bed."

The unconcern, the firmness, and the evident conviction influencing every word spoken by Jean Bart, amazed the cavaliers and embarrassed them as to the course they should pursue. Cavoye drew D'Harcourt aside and said to him in a low tone:

"What shall we do? This young savage appears so confident of what he asserts that

it may be as well to act by his advice; what he said about the full moon particularly struck me. If we are compelled to delay so long, De Ruyter will be able to fight twenty battles without our being present at any of them; and yet we, who with the consent of the king, have agreed to serve under his command as volunteers, will lose all the advantages which this campaign might gain for us with his Majesty. What do you say, D'Harcourt?"

"I agree with you. Let us once more interrogate the sailor, and then we will take our chance."

They returned to the terrace where they found Jean Bart conversing with Sauret.

"My young friend," said D'Harcourt gravely to Jean Bart, "are you aware that you are assuming a great responsibility in proposing to conduct us to the fleet of the United Provinces, and that if we accept, it would be a serious, a very serious engagement, one that demands deep consideration?"

"Holy Cross! what is there so *serious* as you express it, in transporting three men to

Harwich with a south wind, full moon, and tide, when a cabin boy of ten years old could go there with his eyes shut! Do you distrust me? Old Sauret will show you what will reassure you in my regard. Sauret, bring the sword and the paper fastened to the shoulder-belt, and put an end to this."

A moment after Sauret returned triumphant bearing a sword with a silver-plated hilt and blue shoulder-belt to which was attached a paper sealed with the arms of France.

"Ah!" said D'Harcourt after reading it, "this is a certificate attesting that Jean Bart therein named, an apprentice pilot, won the prize as the best artillery man in Calais.*

---

* This certificate still exists in the archives of Dunkirk. In 1660 the King published the following decree: "In order to inspire seamen with the desire of instructing themselves in artillery practice, his Majesty makes known that every Sunday two prizes will be adjudged to those who have answered the most correctly the questions put them, and who have best handled the cannon. Besides, every three months an extra prize of a sword and shoulder-belt of the King's colors will be awarded to the best marksman."

"Well," resumed Jean Bart with a kind of pride, "can you trust a sailor who is so good an artilleryman to conduct you to the reefs of Harwich? But time is passing; it is now half-past ten, and if you are not on board at midnight, it will be useless to attempt the voyage. Do you say yes, or no?"

"But where is your crew?"

"My crew? It consists of myself, this old sailor, and four seamen sleeping on the caravelle: if you say yes, I shall be ready in an hour."

"We will go," said D'Harcourt, after exchanging glances with Cavoye; "have your men ready and we will return with our friend, Count de Coislin, and our people."

"Do not, I beg you, bring too many of the latter; the caravelle is small, and at most, there will be room for only three or four."

"We will each bring a valet," said the gentlemen as they departed guided by Sauret.

"They will be three lazy fellows fit only to embarrass the working of the boat"

grumbled Jean Bart speaking to himself; "but after all the passage is not long, if God aids us, for the wind is favorable." Returning to the terrace he scanned the sky and sea for those signs which never deceive a sailor.

During the whole of the scene above described, Jean Bart's face had not, for an instant, lost its peculiar expression of tranquillity and assurance which characterized him; his speech, although marked by a strong Flemish accent, was clear, short, and expressive of great self-confidence, which in such men, is not vanity, but an involuntary consciousness of what they are, and of what they are capable.

Jean Bart was one of those rare and privileged natures which have been born, as it were, for their specialty, which are never taken off their guard, which adopt extreme measures, make extraordinary resolutions with incredible calm and good-nature, because all this is innate in them; they act without considering the impulse which moves them; they are guided by instinct more than by knowledge, they divine rather

than learn, and they appear to remember, and not to be instructed by experience.

If Jean Bart's manners and speech in addressing nobles of the court, seem strange at a period when respect to those of high birth was so scrupulously observed, we answer that no documents relating to him represent him as having, on any occasion, been intimidated, or losing his simplicity in the presence of rank, however elevated it might be, from the foregoing scene to his interviews with the King and Queen of France, before whom we shall find him as unaffected and as much at his ease, as he was with the Counts de Cavoye and d'Harcourt.

He was still engaged in his observations of the sky and sea when Sauret returned.

"My good friend," said Jean Bart to him, "give me my arms and notify Jacques Houin and the others who are in the caravelle that we are going to sea. Raise the buoy from the anchor, and cast only one grappling iron upon the rocks whilst waiting for us."

"Yes, my young gentleman," answered

Sauret. "Ah! ah! to-day you are captain. To command a caravelle at seventeen years of age is certainly a fine thing. What a misfortune that Master Cornille is not alive to witness it!"

"Alas! yes, Sauret, but God willed otherwise; but, my dear friend, the grudge holds good against the English, and my name is not Bart, if, at some future day, I do not avenge on them the deaths of my father and grandfather. And that the day may not be too distant, I have been considering a plan which occurred to me after the arrival of those fops from the court."

"And what is your idea, my young gentleman?"

"Does not the famous Ruyter command the fleet which these plumed lords are about to join?"

"Yes, Michael Ruyter. He is indeed a captain, as gentle to the sailors as the sea to fish, as I have often heard the Zealanders say."

"Well, Sauret, there will soon be a fight; a fight with the English! Suppose I could

take part in it! What do you say to that, Sauret?"

"Would you think of such a thing? Leave your present fine position with the prospect of soon being a master, to serve as a novice, and without the certainty of being received even in that capacity! Suppose they propose to you to be a cabin-boy?"

"What difference would that make to me provided that I fire a gun against the English or see others fire them, so that I am there,—very near? You speak to me of being master; I am young and have time before me to obtain the position. In the mean time, I shall be overjoyed to see at work such men as Ruyter and the captains of his squadron, that I may learn from their example. I have sailed only on small boats, caravelles or brigantines; I should delight to be on one of those large men-of-war which carry more guns than our largest brigantines number men in the crew; I would love to witness the evolutions of a large squadron, and be present in the battle. Suppose I should be placed for a time in an

inferior condition? My father often said that it was by obeying well that one learned to command well. Besides my intention is only to engage as a volunteer and for a specified time. Yes," added Jean Bart after a moment's pause, "yes, I will decidedly remain with Ruyter if he will accept me."

"I admit that the opportunity is tempting, and I understand your eagerness to take advantage of it, but what will become of Valbué's caravelle?"

"You will take it back."

"And I am to leave you alone in this fleet like a poor herring amid a shoal of porpoises! Did you imagine such a thing from old Sauret who, for seventeen years ate the bread of Master Cornille?"

"Be reasonable, Sauret, and listen to me; if I embark as a simple seaman, you will be obliged to do the same, and I am not willing for that. You are old, and you have worked hard; for seven years you have never left me. No, again I say no; I could not subject you to so great an indignity."

"But, my young gentleman, did I ever leave Master Cornille?"

"But, dear, obstinate Sauret, you were rather a master than a sailor on board of my father's vessels, although, for seven years you took upon yourself the hardest labors so as to watch over me just as if I had been your own son."

"In saying, my young gentleman, that I was a father to you, you do me too much honor. I have always loved you, but now I do not know how to love you enough."

In pronouncing these words the old mariner wiped his eyes with his sleeve.

"You are silly, old Sauret," said Jean Bart, as he turned aside to hide his tears.

Sauret quickly recovered from his emotion and resumed with a cheerful air:

"You said that I watched over you; it is true, but you no longer require my protecting care; you can look out for yourself. God has bestowed upon you a pair of fists and shoulders which have never failed you in time of need. It is not, therefore, as a protector that I wish to remain with you, my young gentleman, but as a spectator of

an enormous fleet of war; for I am not less curious than yourself to see how these *mynheers* will settle affairs with the English. I have, consequently, made up my mind, if you remain with Ruyter, so will I."

"But in my turn, I ask: what will become of Valbué's caravelle?"

The caravelle? Cannot the four men take it back to Dunkirk? They are honest and trustworthy; you yourself said that in such weather a ship-boy could manœuvre the boat."

"Since you wish it, Sauret, so let it be, and I am very glad; go quickly to the caravelle, for the ribboned gentleman will soon arrive and it will require sharp eyes to pass Keneau in spite of the full moon."

Sauret had scarcely departed when the Counts Coislin, d'Harcourt and de Cavoye came followed by their servants, bearing the baggage.

"It is midnight, gentlemen," said Jean Bart; "we must leave immediately."

Preceding them, he lightly descended the steps cut in the rock, which led to the cove where the caravelle was moored.

A quarter of an hour later, the boat, having doubled the reefs of Keneau, favored by the breeze and the ebb-tide, was swiftly advancing to its destination.

CHAPTER III.

JEAN BART SERVES UNDER DE RUYTER—HIS FIRST COMBAT WITH THE ENGLISH.

THE reefs of Harwich, situated at the entrance of the Thames, not far from the city of Harwich, from which they derive their name, afford a tolerably good anchorage in certain winds. There the Dutch fleet, consisting of seventy-five vessels-of-war and eleven fire-ships, had cast anchor after the engagements of the 15th and 16th of June. The English fleet, numerically the same, lay near Queensborough, about twenty leagues distant from the enemy's squadron. Admiral Ruyter narrowly watched from the position he had chosen every movement of the English fleet, and was awaiting the moment when it would leave the Thames, to quit the reefs of Harwich and offer battle on the open sea.

Nearly ten hours after their departure from Saint-Paul, the caravelle directed by Jean Bart accosted the *Sept.-Provinces*, the flag-ship of Ruyter, carrying eighty guns. After the usual formalities, a Dutch officer threw over a rope ladder, and soon Counts Cavoye, d'Harcourt, and de Coislin stood upon the deck, preceded by Jean Bart, who, being more active and more at home on a ship, was several steps in advance of them.

The officer, who spoke French, received the three gentlemen, and when he understood they were bearers of letters from the Count de Charost, Governor of Calais, offered to introduce them to Admiral Ruyter.

Jean Bart, with his hands in the pockets of his wide Flemish breeches, was examining in admiration the rigging of the ship, when he heard the Dutch officer request the gentlemen to follow him; then, without ceremony, he passed before them, approached the officer and respectfully lifting his woollen cap said to him:

"It is I, sir, whom you should conduct to the admiral."

"What does this young man want?" asked the officer, astounded to see a sailor thus taking precedence of three noblemen.

"I wish to see the admiral and to remit to him my three passengers; for I am the captain of the caravelle," replied Jean Bart, in the calm, resolute tone which was habitual to him.

The officer regarded him with surprise without saying a word.

"Yes," said Cavoye, "you can accept his statement, sir; he is in reality, our captain, and more than that, a brave seaman, and I take pleasure in acknowledging it. But never again will I sail in such a nut-shell. From the time we left Saint-Paul we were drenched with sea-water; but the young tar brought us, as he said, with his eyes shut; and I assure you, that young as he is, he is a skilful pilot. Therefore, sir, it is but an act of justice to accede to his request."

The officer measured Jean Bart with his eye from head to feet, and then said in a jeering tone:

"Follow me, my *lord captain*."

And Jean Bart, again thrusting his hands

in his pockets, followed the officer, casting his eyes around him with intense eagerness, noticing, as he passed, the least details of the splendid vessel.

The Dutch officer conducted the French gentlemen and the young sailor to the poop and presented them to his admiral.

Ruyter was at that time about sixty years of age; his hair and heavy mustache were entirely white. He was of medium stature and slender; his face was broad, his forehead high, his eyes, gray and piercing, his skin, quite dark. His limbs were continually agitated by a nervous trembling, the result of poison accidentally administered in his youth. He wore a long robe of black serge confined at the waist with a leathern cincture.

He politely saluted the French lords, and his eye rested for a moment on Jean Bart, who gazed upon him with artless admiration.

"My lord Admiral," said the officer, "these French gentlemen bear you letters from the Governor of Calais, and this young mariner escorted them here."

Cavoye bowed respectfully to the admiral and presented Count Charost's despatches. After reading them, Ruyter said to the gentlemen in tolerably good French, but in a cold, serious manner, that as they desired to witness a naval engagement, they were welcome to remain on board of his ship.

"Gentlemen," he added, "you will now be conducted to the cabin appropriated to your use; I dine at noon, when I should be pleased to see you; should you require any service in the mean time, my valet will attend you."

The gentlemen thanked him warmly for his courtesy. As they were about to retire Cavoye said:

"Permit me, sir, to interest you in favor of this lad who brought us here, and who, also, is desirous of taking part in a combat against the English. But he appears so changed since we have been on board, that I scarcely recognize him; a while ago he was as proud and confident as a page; in your presence, he is as embarrassed and timid as a young girl."

In truth a few minutes had operated a complete change in the bearing of Jean Bart; lately so calm, so indifferent, so self-possessed, he was then agitated; he blushed, drops of water stood upon his brow, and, when he met the piercing glance of Ruyter, he timidly lowered his eyes.

He was experiencing the charm and fascination of the only superiority which, in his view, was really imposing. The simple, resolute young man was unmoved when brought into contact with lords of the court like Coislin and D'Harcourt, but he could not master the sentiments of respect and admiration aroused in presence of so renowned a naval commander as Ruyter. To him Ruyter was what a king is to the courtier, or Newton, to the savant.

Cavoye's remark increased Jean Bart's embarrassment; his face crimsoned more deeply, and he stammered a few unintelligible words.

"Calm yourself, my boy," said Ruyter kindly, somewhat proud of the impression he had produced, and having at a glance judged that this lad would be a more valuable

acquisition to his army than the three courtiers who had come to fight as amateurs.

The kind manner of the admiral reassured Jean Bart, and when Ruyter addressed him he replied to his questions without embarrassment.

"I suppose, although you are very young, you have seen some sea-service?"

"I have been at sea since my earliest childhood; I am the son and grandson of sailors."

"I suspected as much; have you just come from Calais?"

"From Saint-Paul, very near Calais."

"And you commanded your caravelle?"

"The caravelle of Master Valbué; I am his mate. He was appointed to conduct the three gentlemen to you, but he was called upon to pilot one of the vessels of your squadron into Calais, and he directed me to take the command."

"And were you not embarrassed in executing the commission?"

"Oh, it was not in the least difficult to me; I have so frequently traversed these parts. I was one of the crew on a *quaiche*

which plied between Calais, Flessingue, and the coast of Suffolk: we always unloaded near Holsoy Bay."

"In coming here did you see any war-vessels?"

"I acknowledge to you, my lord Admiral, that, instead of steering at once from Saint-Paul to the *Sept.-Provinces*, when I was near Koning's-Diep, not far from the entrance of the Thames, my curiosity was excited to discover what might be going on at the mouth of the Thames; thinking also that you would not be displeased to receive any information I could gather, I took advantage of a light breeze which had sprung up, and turned a little from my way, without the knowledge of my passengers, who would, certainly, have opposed me, and then I began to beat about in the channel."

"What did you see?" eagerly exclaimed Ruyter. "Did they give you chase?"

"Oh, that did not trouble me; my caravelle flies over the waves like a sea-gull. If a frigate had chased me, I would have drawn it to passes where it could not follow me. I continued to advance at the risk of

being taken prisoner with the *land gentlemen* whom I conducted to you, Admiral; but I wanted to see, and I did see; for, as I advanced up the Coln until I left Colchester to the northwest—"

"What! you ventured so far?" interrupted Ruyter, in astonishment.

"Yes, sir, but I was forced to stop there, because the buoys and all that mark the route had been destroyed: near Middleground (a reef in the Thames) I saw from ten to twelve frigates which were exchanging signals with the people on land. I saw many masts of ships which appeared to be at anchor before Queensborough. Then a *quaiche* set sail towards me and gave me chase, but they lost sight of me near West Rocks, and I arrived here without accident."

"Well done, my child," said Ruyter; "your information is valuable and leaves me no doubt of the correctness of the communication made by Vice-Admiral de Liefde. You have rendered me an important service. What can I do for you?"

"Since you are willing, sir, to grant me a favor, I beg you to send back the caravelle

to my master, the royal pilot at Saint-Paul, and to retain me on your vessel in any capacity, even in that of page or ship-boy," said Jean Bart, clasping his hands in a supplicating manner.

"Certainly, my boy," answered Ruyter, "you can remain and fulfil the duties suited to your capacity. I will give your caravelle in charge of a master of a boat from Ostend."

"Thanks, thanks, sir; but—but I have another favor to ask."

"What is it?"

"I have with me an old mariner who never leaves me; he was my father's sailor: will you keep him also?"

"Yes, the old mariner, also, my boy," said Ruyter, smiling.

"A thousand thanks, Admiral." The expression of gratitude which lighted Jean Bart's tearful eyes and said more than words, pleased Ruyter, and he answered with paternal kindness:

"You are a good young man; continue to be what you now are, put your confidence in God, be brave, alert, vigilant, and

you will advance, perhaps, to a high grade in the service. Remember always, my dear child, what I am going to tell you : I am an admiral, I command a hundred vessels-of-war ; know that I commenced life turning the wheel at the rope yard in the port of Flessingue, and that I entered the navy as a cabin-boy. Learn from this that with God's help and grace we can accomplish anything when we abandon to Him our fate. Now go, I shall not forget you."

The admiral directed Jean Bart and Sauret to be inscribed on the ship's roll as simple sailors.

During the first days of his installation on board of the *Sept.-Provinces*, Jean Bart was frequently called upon to endure much that was disagreeable in consequence of the severe discipline established on a man-of-war, and to which he had great difficulty in accustoming himself. He complained of it to Sauret, who replied :

"Ah ! my young gentleman, a man-of-war is not like a privateer, where the master associates as an equal with his sailors. Here the sailor is as much a slave as a

Christian among the Turks; here we walk, smoke, breathe, sleep, eat, drink at the will of the captain, who has no one in authority over him; such being the case, my young gentleman, a vessel of war is as devoid of pleasure as a monastery of Minims, particularly with the *mynheers*, who are as dumb as herrings in a net. Therefore, to speak respectfully, had you asked my opinion, I would have advised you to cut the ropes, to leave the ship and— "

"Perhaps I may do as you suggest at some future time; certainly not on the eve of a battle. Think, my dear friend, how I long to witness a grand sea-fight, and take part in a naval engagement! I, who have seen nothing of the kind, and have only exchanged a few shots with the red-coats on the coast of Suffolk. And then it is an honor to serve under the famous Ruyter, as it was an honor for you and my father to serve under the Fox of the Sea; and I wish to show myself a worthy sailor of such an admiral."

"It is undoubtedly true, my young gentleman, that there is no finer sight than two

fleets engaged in a vigorous combat, and it is a great honor to be among the combatants; but I am troubled to see you a simple sailor or gunner, and unable in that position to be remarked as would be the case if you were placed according to your merit; for, in truth, you are not now in your proper sphere."

"Indeed, you are right; suppose I ask the admiral to relinquish his place to me? There, certainly, I should be noticed as I deserve. What say you, my old friend?"

"I say that you are ridiculing me, my young gentleman."

"You know, dear Sauret, that I have too much affection and respect for you to turn you into ridicule; but sometimes you are singularly blind to my defects, and if I believed you, I should become very proud. I asked Ruyter as a favor, to allow me to serve on his ship as a simple sailor, or even as a ship-boy; he granted my request; I have been appointed to a gun and even chief gunner."

"Pardon me," interrupted Sauret; "they did you no favor by nominating you chief

gunner for the piece you are to work; this was only decided after you stood an examination, and after the boatswain and head-gunner had seen you manœuvring and they were forced to acknowledge that you were the best artilleryman on board."

"Therefore, my dear old friend, you see they do justice to merit, and that they have assigned me a position which suits me admirably; I have nothing whatever to complain of in that respect, but I dislike the haughtiness, the insolent manners of a set of officers of high and low grade, who, presuming on the greater or less degree of authority with which they are invested, take pleasure in annoying their subordinates in a thousand ways, and generally for trifling causes not worthy the notice of a sensible man. I now understand why the great Ruyter said that discipline on board of a man-of-war ought to be severe, and obedience absolute even in the minutest details. It is, I admit, somewhat hard to me in the beginning, but I shall become accustomed to it, and at the close of this campaign, we shall see."

The fleet remained at the reefs of Harwich during the whole month of July; but in the early days of August, Ruyter gave the order to set sail. One hour afterwards, the immense fleet, consisting of eighty men-of-war, was moving in order of battle with admirable precision to windward from Harwich, with a fresh breeze from south-south-east.

At the sight of the novel spectacle, Jean Bart exclaimed, joyously: "Oh! dear Sauret, how beautiful!"

"Yes, my young gentleman, it is magnificent, but it indicates that the shock of battle will soon commence."

"So much the better!" cried Jean Bart. "I have long desired this day."

On the 5th of August, the two fleets were in presence.

As the battle has no interest for us apart from its connection with Jean Bart, we will give an abridged account of it as narrated by old Sauret to one of his friends at Duinburg, when the Dutch fleet anchored on the west coast of the island of Walcheren, a

few days after the engagement of August 5th and 6th.

"At sunrise we perceived the English to the windward, and under full sails. We breakfasted hastily and awaited the signal. At noon, the second lieutenant cried out: 'Gunners, fire.' From that moment I never left my port-hole; for I served on the right of the gun which my young gentleman aimed and discharged. At the first broadside poured upon us by the enemy, the young man turned pale; yes, he turned pale, he was afraid; in truth, he had cause; for three men of our gun fell dead upon the ropes, and he was covered with their blood; I watched him after that closely and anxiously; I must say, my heart beat and I felt that I was paler than he; but at the second broadside, which was as destructive as the first, my young Mr. Jean, instead of turning pale, cried out with sparkling eyes: 'Holy Cross, I am no longer afraid, and now it is my turn, Messrs. Englishmen, I shall avenge my father!' I never saw a more intrepid gunner, for we remained at our port-hole from noon until evening, I

loading, and he, aiming and discharging the piece. As night drew on, we were so overcome that our arms were benumbed and were as if bruised and beaten; we heard them saying around us that we had performed prodigies, but I saw nothing but our cannon, and I only knew that we were suffering frightfully from hunger and thirst.

"When the firing had ceased the admiral descended to the battery to compliment us; he had just disarmed, and having been wounded in the left arm, he carried it in a sling through which the blood was dripping; when passing our piece, he lightly touched my young gentleman on the shoulder and said to him:

"'Well, my child, how do you like this?'

"'I am so delighted that I could say a great deal, sir, if my throat were less dry,' resolutely replied my young gentleman.

The admiral took this pleasantry in good part and ordered some beer and biscuits to be given us; we were much refreshed, although we ate with one eye on our biscuit and the other on our gun, for it had been reported to us by the people on

the deck, that the admiral was isolated from the fleet, and that the English were endeavoring, notwithstanding the fog, to surround us. At last we fell asleep near our gun, amid the dead whose bodies had not been removed.

"At daybreak the battle recommenced. I had difficulty in arousing my young gentleman from his heavy sleep. At one bound he was at his post. As Master Jean and myself were the only ones left of those who served our piece, our number was made up by the marines who were sent to take the place of the deceased gunners. Never did I meet a man more prompt and more intrepid than my young gentleman; he aimed, he levelled without cessation, he shouted with joy like a child as he approached the match to the light, and when over-heated, he plunged his head into the bucket of water which was there to cool the cannons, saying to me gayly: "What is good for the gun, must be good for the gunner.'

"But now our young gentleman displayed a marvellous courage. After a long con-

tinued cannonade we heard the terrible cry: *A Fire-ship!* At the same moment the boatswain descended to the battery and called certain men to the deck, among them my young gentleman and myself. All was in tumult there; but Admiral Ruyter with his speaking-trumpet in his hand armed with a cuirass and casque appeared as calm as a fisherman seated in his boat in fine weather; we found the men lowering the long boat. By the side of the admiral were the three lords whom we had brought from Saint-Paul. At the first glance I knew that they had not been afraid to spoil their laces and ribbons: their faces were blackened with powder, they had muskets in their hands and they seemed full of martial ardor. When the boat was ready for sea, the admiral directed an old boatswain to take command, to draw off and attack the fire-ship.

"We descended to the number of twenty including my young gentleman, myself, and the brave French lords, who had asked as a favor to be allowed to take part in the expedition.

"Our boat was tolerably large, carrying one gun. Master Lély was at the helm. We were all armed to the teeth, carrying at our girdle a pistol, a cutlass and a boarding-axe, and lying at our feet, a musket, which we were to take on boarding the fire-ship. The three French lords were at the front, armed like ourselves, and looking brave and resolute.

"We were at first sheltered by the side of the ship, and were surrounded by a thick yellow vapor like a winter's fog, so dense was the smoke of the powder. The sea, calm from the detonations, was as smooth as a lake of oil, and the grape shot dropping into it from time to time, rippled it like rain falling into water. My young gentleman and myself were on the same bench, our hand on the oar and our poniard between our teeth, when Master Lély on a signal from the admiral called out: 'Push out to sea!' At the same moment the helm of the vessel was turned to the lee-ward and all the sails braced to starboard, we remained behind it, and not far from us the fire-ship, which was a frigate almost

unrigged by the admiral's fire, who immediately after its discharge ordered us to attack. At that critical moment I recommended my soul to God, reminding Master Jean to do the same, and we steered towards the frigate. Master Lély then cried out: 'Frenchmen at the front, fire! throw grenades; the four sailors will keep that up; the other four will row.' We were near the fire-ship and saw about twenty men on deck. Our brave lords and the four sailors discharged so many grenades that they swept the deck, although we received a discharge of grape-shot which struck Master Lély in the right thigh; the brave sailor who was standing at the helm, fell heavily, but continued to steer seated, directed in the manœuvring by young Master Jean, who bravely mounted a bench to see more clearly.

"We continued to fire upon the ship, but we distinguished nothing around us, for we were enveloped in a cloud of smoke. Suddenly Master Jean exclaimed:

"'Master Lély, the long-boat of the fire-ship is pushing off.'

"'Oarsmen, back, back,' thundered Lély,

who, in spite of his wound which was bleeding profusely, rose to his knees to work the helm; 'the ship is about to blow up, and if we are in the eddy we shall be swallowed up.'

"You know that new vigor was infused into us: our boat flew over the water; three minutes later we saw bright flames, we felt a terrible shock, the ship blew up, and a great column of white, compact smoke arose.

"'Board the English boat!' cried Master Lély, steering towards the long-boat containing the crew of the fire-ship. We rowed vigorously so as to board it, and I must say that instead of attempting to escape they bravely awaited us. I threw aside my oar and followed my young Master Jean, who, brandishing his axe, had already leaped over the bench. I came up to him as he sprang on board the English boat; his first blow fell upon a tall red-coat, who was prostrated to the ground. I was by the side of Count de Coislin, who with perfect coolness was loading a pistol; at that moment an Englishman raised an enormous

cutlass over the Frenchman, saying in bad French : ' Ah, my gentleman with the orange plume, you shall never return alive.' Mr. de Coislin, without betraying the least emotion, parried the blow with the back of his sword, fired his pistol, and said calmly : ' My friend, it is you who will not return alive, if you please.' The man fell against me in such a manner that I was thrown down upon the deck of the English boat, receiving a blow which stunned me. All I remember of what passed is that I fell, was sensible of great cold, after which I felt as if suffocating, and then was conscious of nothing more. When I recovered consciousness, I found myself in the marine hospital, and I was told that my young gentleman, seeing me fall into the sea, had saved me and placed me on our long-boat. Poor Lély died of his wounds ; that same evening we were making good our retreat, the English not daring to follow us, and at nightfall we moored before Doorlog, between the coast of Flanders and the island of Walcheren."

CHAPTER IV.

JEAN BART AND HIS SAILOR, GASPARD KEYSER—HIS RETURN TO DUNKIRK—HIS FIRST CAPTURES AS PRIVATEER—THE PRINCIPAL PRIVATEERS OF DUNKIRK.

THE engagements of August 5th and 6th did not prove advantageous to the Dutch fleet. Although Ruyter had displayed his accustomed valor, he could not contend successfully with an enemy so numerically superior, and it was only by the most admirable manœuvres that he saved a portion of his forces after sustaining considerable loss. But the following year he retaliated gloriously: on June 16, 1667, he appeared with his squadron in the Thames at the mouth of the Medway; he broke the chain which barred the latter river, took possession of the port of Sheerness and burned all the shipping in the harbor; he next at-

tacked Chatham, demolished its fortifications, and returning to the Thames ascended that river, destroying every vessel he encountered, and spreading terror as far as London. The results of this expedition were such as to hasten the conclusion of the negotiations which were in progress at Breda, and to obtain for Holland much more advantageous conditions than she had a right to expect.

During this campaign Jean Bart gained additional renown, but as soon as peace was declared, not liking to serve in the Marine corps he presented his resignation to Ruyter, who reluctantly accepted it. Wishing, however, to secure, as far as possible, so good a seaman to Holland, he recommended him to a privateer of Flessingue, who at once appointed him boatswain of the *Canard doré*, a brigantine belonging to himself. This brigantine like all the vessels of Flessingue, served as merchantman in time of peace, and as privateer during war: in the former case its capacity was three hundred and fifty tons; in the latter it carried ten guns.

Jean Bart remained four years on the

Canard doré, and perfected himself in the nautical art. On this vessel he became acquainted with Gaspard Keyser, a young man from Dunkirk, a few years older than Jean Bart. A similarity of tastes and character led to an intimacy between them which soon ripened into a devoted friendship. About this time, old Sauret, who, in consequence of age and wounds, had become permanently an invalid, was obliged to separate from his young gentleman. Jean Bart, whose mother had died some time previously, gave a power of attorney to Sauret and appointed him administrator of his little property, addressing him in the following terms:

"You will occupy our house in Church Street, and you will use the money which will be furnished you by the notary, Wanbrewelt, to procure for yourself every comfort you may need. Should there be any remaining, employ it in any really needful repairs of the house; on my first visit to Dunkirk, I will have it put in complete order."

The good old man having recommended

his young gentleman to his friend, left with a sad heart.

"Mr. Keyser," he said, "I commend to you my young Master Jean; now that you and he are sailors to each other I am satisfied."

Jean Bart, after the departure of Sauret, remained on the *Canard doré*, of which Keyser had become first lieutenant, and himself second lieutenant under Svoëlt, the captain and proprietor of the brig. The two men were well pleased with their condition, when in April, 1672, a letter from Sauret informed them that war had been declared between France and Holland. The old man urged his young gentleman to return to Dunkirk, where already many were preparing their vessels for privateers, and assuring him that he would not fail to obtain a position suitable to his talents and reputation.

Jean Bart followed Sauret's advice, and accompanied by his friend Keyser, soon arrived at Dunkirk, where they were employed either as mates or simple boatswains on armed vessels.

At last, in 1674, Jean Bart obtained com-

mand of the galiot *King David*, and at the same time his friend Keyser was appointed captain of the *Alexander*, a vessel of equal size.

Then commenced for Jean Bart that series of wonderful exploits which rendered his name so popular in France and so formidable to England and Holland. To give our readers some idea of the immense damage done to the enemy, we shall mention that, according to the official report deposited in the national archives, Jean Bart captured ten vessels in 1674, seven in 1675, sixteen in 1676, and three in 1678; in all *fifty-two* vessels in the space of five years. He took these prizes either by himself, or in company with Keyser or other captains of privateers from Dunkirk.

The prizes consisted principally of merchantmen or armed fishing vessels; but among the number were also several men-of-war, one, the frigate *Neptune*, of thirty-two guns. This last prize obtained for him the reward of a gold chain from Louis XIV.

Colbert, then Minister of the Navy, was struck not only by the large number of

captures made by Jean Bart, but also by his intrepidity and the influence he exercised over the other captains of privateers. Hence he contemplated forming, as it were, a squadron composed of such vessels, of which Jean Bart was to have the command, as the other captains would willingly submit to his authority. Colbert's idea was destined to prove advantageous, for Dunkirk was a most important point whence to carry on that incessant, furious warfare, which, far more than regular naval battles, strikes at the heart of an enemy thus attacked, inasmuch as it daily acts upon the commerce which it first fetters and at last destroys. The following letter on this subject, addressed by Colbert to Hubert, superintendent of marine at Dunkirk, enclosed a gold chain to be forwarded to Jean Bart from the king.

"VERSAILLES, September 18, 1676.

"His Majesty has learned with pleasure that a privateer of Dunkirk, commanded by Captain Bart, has captured a Dutch man-of-war of thirty-two guns. As it is important to encourage the said captains to con-

tinue their warfare against the Dutch, the Sieur Hubert will find enclosed a gold chain which his Majesty bestows upon Captain Bart as a recompense for the above mentioned action.

"As considerable advantage might be derived from the said privateer-captains if they could be induced to form a squadron and place themselves under the supreme command of one among them in their war against the enemy, his Majesty desires Sieur Hubert to send him a full list of the number and names of the said captains, as also a notice as to the reputation enjoyed by each, the actions in which they have been engaged since the commencement of the war, and the size of their vessels; he will, moreover, examine whether, in consideration of aid from his Majesty, either by furnishing them with vessels to be armed as cruisers, without requiring the usual pay of one third, or by granting them other advantages, they would be willing, as said above, to serve under the command of one."

The dispatch concludes with an express direction to Sieur Hubert to guard the most inviolable secrecy as to the king's design.

Hubert replies to the minister, September 24, that on the 20th of the month he

had forwarded to Captain Bart the gold chain so graciously bestowed by his Majesty. "As the present," he says, "was received with great joy, so it has roused the the emulation of the other captains, who are most anxious to signalize themselves also by some brilliant action." He adds: "As to his Majesty's idea of deriving advantage from these captains, there are many of them who would willingly yield obedience to Captain Bart. His bravery and his manner of commanding have given them entire confidence in him; but self-interest and gain are the motives which influence them under all circumstances."

On September 28, he sent to the minister the list which the latter had demanded, accompanying it with the names of the privateer-captains of Dunkirk, the ships they had commanded, and a notice upon each. We give an extract from this remarkable document.

"First, Capt. Jean Bart, about thirty years of age,* advanced to the grade of

* He was really only twenty-six.

captain three years ago, commands at present the frigate *Palm*, of twenty-four guns; crew consists of one hundred and fifty men."

Notes.—After mentioning briefly the captures made by this captain, either by himself or in conjunction with others, he adds:

"In his last action, Captain Bart, unaided, captured a Dutch vessel of thirty-two guns.

"Whilst he was lieutenant, his captain praised so highly his bravery and capability that he was appointed, in consequence, to his first frigate, the *King David*, of eight guns, with which, in company with Captain Keyser, he captured a Dutch convoy of ten guns.

"With his second frigate, *The Royal*, of twenty-four guns, accompanied by another of twenty guns, commanded by the same Captain Keyser, he took a Dutch convoy with their fleet loaded with herrings.

"The same two captains with another vessel of less size, attacked a fleet going from England to Ostend and convoyed by three men-of-war: Captain Bart singled out the one of eighteen guns, captured it in sight of the other convoys, leaving to the two captains from Dunkirk the entire fleet to be taken to port.

"Second, Captain Keyser, thirty-five years of age, commanded the frigate, *The Great Louis*, armed with twenty guns, and worked by a crew of a hundred and fifty men.

"*Notes.*—What has been said above of him makes known the friendship existing between him and Captain Bart: both are capable men, *but they must have the liberty of living as they now do, familiarly with their crew, conferring with the officers and sailors before they undertake an action; after that their authority is absolute.*"

The list sent to the minister contains, besides the above, the names with short notices of about twenty-eight privateer-captains; among them Capt. Michel Small is mentioned as equalling Captains Bart and Keyser in courage and capability; Captain Vacrenié, as having as much courage and genius as Captain Bart, but with this difference, that Bart would venture more and regard personal risk less than Vacrenié.

Colbert, after receiving the report of the Superintendent of Marine at Dunkirk (report which is now in the National Library

among *Colbert's Manuscripts*), made, according to his custom, inquiries in other quarters concerning these same captains; the original of this document, without signature, is among the same manuscripts. We give an extract from it, which bears date November 16, 1676, and is headed:

"*List of the principal captains commanding the privateers of Dunkirk.*

"Jean Bart, commanding a frigate of twenty-four guns.	Good soldiers and sailors.
"Keyser, commanding a frigate of eighteen guns.	

"*Notes.*—I put these two captains together because they usually act in concert. They are natives of Dunkirk, from thirty to thirty-five years of age, sons and grandsons of two famous privateer-captains who acquired great reputation during the war between Spain and Holland previously to the treaty of Munster.

"They acquitted themselves honorably and were victorious in every engagement during their cruises. Their descendants have not degenerated, although circumstances obliged them to serve as mates, boatswains or sailors at the commencement

of the present war; having proved themselves worthy of commanding, they have captured five of the enemy's frigates, the smallest of which was larger than their own vessels. Among other considerable prizes, should be mentioned a Dutch frigate loaded with gold-dust, worth eighty thousand livres, and eight bilanders, of which latter an account will be given when speaking of Pitre Lasep. The said Bart took recently, a ship of thirty-two guns.

"Pitre Lasep, aged forty years.

"*Notes.*—He was in the king's service on board the man-of-war *The Faithful*, in the position of boatswain. Having obtained the command of a frigate armed for cruising, he proved that he merited it; for on his first voyage with Captains Bart and Keyser, he was the first to attack three vessels, the least of which was stronger than his own, and having received a broadside from all, he enabled the said Bart and Keyser to pour their fire upon them; they succeeded in capturing one of the said vessels, put the two others to flight, and took nine bilanders laden with every description of merchandise, which were being convoyed by the enemy."

Other captains are mentioned as having taken many prizes, but we omit notice of

them as they were not connected with Jean Bart.

According to these documents, the authenticity of which cannot be questioned, we see that in 1676 the number of privateer-captains belonging to the port of Dunkirk, all enjoying a high reputation as brave seamen, amounted to about thirty, but that Jean Bart is always placed first, and, as it were, apart from the rest. We also see that the friendship existing between Bart and Keyser had not diminished, and that they always acted in concert. We remark, moreover, several peculiarities in the manner in which these intrepid seamen acted during combats at sea; for instance, when there was question of attacking a ship or convoy with their two vessels, Keyser, although five years the senior of Jean Bart, received from him his instructions and orders as to the manœuvring of his boat. Another curious detail consigned to this interesting document, is that Jean Bart, in consequence, no doubt, of his thorough knowledge of the character of sailors, thought he would interest his men more in the success of an attack

by admitting them to his previous deliberations, that they might thus have part both in the council and combat; therefore, before the battle Jean Bart asked in a familiar manner the opinion not only of his officers, but also of his sailors, knowing that long practice amid rough experience can frequently make wise and valuable suggestions. Thus, he discussed his plan of attack with his crew, and matured it by an exchange of opinions; but having once thoroughly considered the plan or rather sanctioned it by this free expression of sentiments, he required a rigorous observance of it from all, and in proportion as Jean Bart had been conciliating during deliberation, never taking advantage of his superior position in order to enforce his views, so much the more was he uncompromising, imperious and absolute in carrying into execution what had been agreed to by all.

At the end of the documents from which we have made extracts, the superintendent, Hubert, gives Colbert his impressions regarding the project proposed by the minister, of forming the privateers of Dunkirk into one

or more squadrons under the command of Jean Bart and the best captains. The project appears to him difficult of execution for various reasons: the first is that the captains of privateers and the sailors value freedom of action, and "distrust all engagements in his Majesty's service;" again, if the effort should be made to form strong squadrons, a sufficient number of sailors could not be secured to equip them; moreover, the captains would expect less benefit to themselves individually; for, if strong squadrons are sent to sea, one of two things would happen; either the enemy would abandon their commerce entirely, and there would be no prizes for the cruisers; or, if they continued their trade with foreign nations, their merchantmen would be escorted by a force sufficient to resist the attacks of our privateers. On the other hand, the want of union among the captains would prevent a simultaneous and general equipment of their vessels. "There are so many different persons interested, that in order to carry out the design of uniting them together, it would be necessary to in-

form them of it in advance, a step which might have serious consequences."

Mr. Hubert terminates this by giving his own opinion upon the project in question.

"If his Majesty," he says, "simply intends the privateer-captains to continue their present style of warfare against the enemy, there is no necessity to oblige them to form strong squadrons; nothing more would be required than adroitly to bring those together who have the most vessels by offering them some assistance. Should his Majesty grant them his own frigates, they might return *only* one-tenth of the prize taken, the rest being left to them to augment the portion of the sailors, and to indemnify them for this, they could be engaged to furnish all that composes the outfit of a vessel. It may be that other captains seeing great profit in this arrangement will, by degrees, request to unite with them, and thus, as occasion may demand, one or more squadrons can be formed. Besides the use of his Majesty's frigates, other help should be given them, that they might be induced to greater exertion through the expectation of increased profits. But in whatever manner aid is furnished them, *it is necessary that they should not know what his*

Majesty demands of them, particularly in the commencement. For this reason, it would be well to equip three or four vessels (one, at first, to be under the command of Jean Bart), and to continue to prepare other ships according to circumstances: in this manner they would be in a condition to attack all the fleets which might enter or leave the port, and would seriously injure the enemies of his Majesty.

"In regard to the crew, even a slight increase of their portion of the prize will induce them to engage in sufficient numbers.

"Signed, HUBERT."

Colbert adopted the ideas of Superintendent Hubert. The privateer-captains received the aid and encouragement which he had proposed, and Jean Bart took prizes which were far more profitable to himself and to the joint owners of the ship. We may form an idea of this by the official report presented to the king and his council in camp at Cambray, April 5, 1677. By this we find that on January 19, 1677, Jean Bart, commanding the frigate *Palm*, in company with Captain Lasie, captured a dogher (a fishing vessel), bearing the flag of the

Prince of Orange, on its return from a fishing expedition; on February 12, he took two doghers; on the 15th of the same month, he captured another dogher. The king, being in council, adjudged to him the ransom of the prizes, less one-tenth, belonging to the French admiral, and another tenth to be paid to the hospital at Dunkirk. On the 16th of February, Captain Bart, in company with Captain Lombard, captured a dogher, the *Prince William*, adjudged by the king in council to Bart and Lombard, less one-tenth belonging to the French admiral.

February 21, the *Palm* captured a small Dutch vessel, adjudged to Bart as above.

February 21, the frigate *Palm*, Captain Bart, in company with Captain Coopman, took a dogher laden with wine. Prize adjudged to Bart and Coopman, less one-tenth.

May 7, the frigate *Palm*, in company with Captain Soutennie, captured a vessel loaded with oranges, sugar, etc. Prize adjudged to Captains Bart and Soutennie.

In consequence of illness, Jean Bart was forced to remain inactive a whole year. He

resumed his cruises only in June, 1678, in company with his friend Keyser, commanding the frigate *Emperor*, and Captain Soutennie, commanding a small frigate, *Our Lady of Lombardy*. Jean Bart was in command of a royal frigate, the *Dolphin*, committed to him by the king in accordance with the suggestion made by Superintendent Hubert. They discovered a vessel-of-war, to which they gave chase. Jean Bart boarded it first, Soutennie seconded him, and Keyser boarded it at the stern. After a combat of one hour, the enemy surrendered, having fifty men either killed or wounded; the assailants on their side lost six men killed and thirty wounded. Among the latter was Jean Bart, whose face and hands were much burned, and the calf of his leg was carried off by a ball.

All the above facts were stated in the official report, and the man-of-war with all its arms, ammunition, etc., were adjudged to Captains Bart, Keyser and Soutennie.

Jean Bart quickly recovered from his wound, for we find that in July of the same year he captured near Bermuda a vessel

with a cargo of brandy, wine and prunes, and in August he took a dogher, the *Saint Anthony.*

In recompense of his bravery and patriotic devotion, Colbert appointed Jean Bart lieutenant in the royal marine, under the authority of the Count de Vermandois, admiral of France.

This grade was equivalent to the rank of lieutenant-colonel of the army, which was granted only to gentlemen belonging to the highest nobility. In conferring it upon a plebeian like Jean Bart, they supposed they were bestowing a favor of which he might justly be proud. But we shall soon see that he was unmoved by the distinction, and that he refused to perform the duties.

CHAPTER V.

JEAN BART IN HIS OWN HOME—HIS WIFE, HIS CHILDREN, HIS COUSIN, THE PASTOR OF DRINKAM.

HITHERTO, we have depicted Jean Bart as a simple sailor, or a privateer captain, displaying under the most difficult circumstances a rare energy and intrepid courage; we have not finished with his exploits at sea, but before entering upon the recital of this second portion of his life, the most brilliant of his maritime career, we desire to show him to our readers in his own home, with his wife, his children, the old Sauret, and his cousin, the pastor of Drinkam. Jean Bart is one of those natures which are the more admired, the better they are known.

Perhaps the reader remembers the old house of Master Cornille Bart, situated in

Church Street at Dunkirk, that good city in which the little Jean Bart passed his childhood under the care of the old Sauret, climbing the ropes of all the vessels in the harbor, venturing out into the open sea to the great terror of his mother, or listening intently to the recital of the combats of his father, and the bold exploits of the Fox of the Sea. In August, 1689, that house was still standing; Cornille Bart and his wife had died long before, and their son, Jean Bart, had religiously preserved the paternal habitation in which he dwelt with his wife and children.

Nothing was changed in the old house: there were still the same high, narrow windows, the stone steps carefully cleaned, the date of its construction marked in iron bars upon the simple front, and the heavy oaken door, with large brass nails shining like gold.

It was towards the end of August, 1680, a little while after a visit made by the king to Dunkirk for the purpose of seeing the magnificent works in the harbor, and the fortifications directed by Vauban. In the

large hall which opened upon the garden, the windows of which, framed in lead, were half covered by the young tender shoots of the hops which tapestried the outer wall, Jean Bart was seated with his wife, Nicole Goutier, whom he had married in February, 1675.

If no change appeared in the exterior of the old house in Church Street, the same could not be said of the interior, which presented a singular *coup d'œil*, for in his life of adventure, every privateer-captain took possession of the furniture he fancied on board of his prizes; hence the want of uniformity in the rich furniture of Jean Bart's house. Here, a piece of precious stuff taken from a Dutch vessel formed a magnificent portière; there, was a sofa of Japanese reeds; again, a mat from Lima, or a Turkey carpet covered the floor.

Jean Bart was then thirty years of age. On account of the great heat, he had thrown aside his jacket, wearing only his long scarlet waistcoat, and his wide gray linen breeches, fastened by two buttons, made of Spanish piastres; his features were more

decided, and his long, light-colored mustache would have imparted an air of severity to his physiognomy, had it not been for the expression of cheerfulness and good humor which habitually characterized it. At that moment particularly, Jean Bart seemed perfectly happy, for, extended in an arm-chair he was playing with his son, François Cornille Bart,* then more than three years old.

Mme. Bart was about twenty years of age. She was dressed in the Flemish style, wearing a long waisted, black serge dress, a stiff black collar, and a cap, fitting so closely as almost to conceal her beautiful curls; she held on her knees a little girl nearly two years old. To complete the picture, old Sauret, seated before a walnut table, was reading attentively some papers which he had taken from a portfolio.

A strong odor of tobacco impregnated the apartment, for Jean Bart continued to be an inveterate smoker, and what caused at

* Cornille Bart was worthy of the glorious name he bore, for in the following century he became vice-admiral and lieutenant-general in the royal marines.

the time his bursts of laughter which interrupted Sauret and drew upon the corsair a gentle reprimand from Nicole, was the singular face made by the little Cornille Bart as his father enveloped him in a cloud of smoke from his pipe.

"Jean, what are you doing?" said Nicole, "it will injure the poor child to inhale the smoke; see how it makes him cough."

"Bah!" said Jean Bart. "On the contrary, Nicole, nothing is more healthful to young sailors than such smoke; am I not right, dear Sauret?"

Sauret, delighted to be called upon as arbiter in the difference between the parents, removed his spectacles, laid down his papers and replied in a magisterial manner:

"So healthful, my young gentleman, that to speak with respect, I should say that to breathe this smoke is, in a measure, indispensable to the education of every young sailor destined in the future to inhale the glorious smoke of gunpowder."

"The smoke of gunpowder!" exclaimed Nicole, terrified, "I hope the poor child will never inhale that."

"He!" replied Jean Bart; "and I hope that when he is ten years old, if the good God sends us war, he will already have smelt powder, and that at fifteen his throat will have become as black from it as is the bowl of my pipe. Is it not so, Sauret?"

"To speak with respect, my young gentleman, you mean to jest, but every one knows that the interior of the throat of a man who has been often in battle is bronzed as it were, by this—"

"Yes, yes," said Jean Bart, interrupting Sauret, "every one knows that the throat of a soldier is of the color of the chamber of an old gun. You will have a bronzed throat, since Sauret wishes it, will you not, my brave little Cornille," said Jean Bart, tossing the child above his head, whilst the child in turn laughed and stretched out his hands to caress his father.

"Ah! Jean," said Nicole, with a sigh, "can you desire such a future for our boy?"

"Such a future! why it was for that reason I gave him the names of my father and grandfather."

"To speak with respect, my young gentleman, such were exactly the words of the deceased Mistress Bart, your mother, when you clapped your hands at the sound of the cannon during the siege of 1658. Ah! that is a long time ago; you were then eight years old, and Master Cornille was suffering from his wound, and resting in the chair in which you are now seated."

"Yes," said Jean Bart, sadly, "I have not forgotten it, and the English have not yet paid me the debt."

The entrance of an ecclesiastic dispelled from Jean Bart's face the expression of sadness with which the thought of his father had clouded it. It was Nicolas Bart, a first cousin of Jean Bart, and pastor of Drinkam, in the lordship of Bergues-Saint-Winoc.

"Good morning, Cousin Nicolas," said Jean Bart, affectionately pressing the hand of the priest, whom he had always loved and venerated, and with whom, towards the end of his life, he was to pass a few months to repose from the fatigues of war.

The pastor of Drinkam was a good, gentle, simple, and an extremely timid man, but possessed of solid virtue, learning, and extraordinary courage when necessity demanded an act of charity. He died in 1719, Superior of the Seminary of Bergues, universally esteemed and honored, but, we repeat, excessively timid, as the following incident will show. Being sent for one day by Count d'Estrades, Governor of Dunkirk, and urgently invited to be seated, the poor curé, dismayed, and entirely losing his self-possession, was about to sit upon a stove, when the marshal prevented him. Long afterwards those kind of stoves were jestingly called at Dunkirk "chairs of the curé of Drinkam."

"What is the news, Cousin Nicolas?" asked Jean Bart.

"Nothing that I know, Cousin Jean, except that I shall return to Drinkam."

"When?" said both Jean and Nicole in a tone of regret.

"To-morrow; you know that I have already left my flock several days without a shepherd."

"Bah! Cousin Nicolas, there are no wolves at Drinkam. Do not be troubled."

"There are no wolves, Jean!" said the priest, smiling; "do we not all carry wolves within ourselves?"

"Oh! those will not do much damage during the few days you would prolong your absence; therefore it is settled you will remain three or four days longer."

"Do not refuse, Cousin," added Nicole.

"Yes, dear friends, I must refuse. But come to Drinkam; you know that my poor presbytery is at your service."

"As to that, I enjoy myself more with you there than here: my little Cornille is so happy running through your orchard and fighting bravely with your turkey-cock, and then you have a peacock, in which I delight; in a word, at your house we are so tranquil, so quiet,—and then your meadows are so green, and your river, your boat—"

"Do not speak of my boat, Jean," said the priest pleasantly; "you nearly drowned me twice, thanks to your notion of putting a sail upon a flat boat, and worse still, forcing me to go with you at the risk of—"

"Oh! yes," interrupted Jean Bart, laughing, "pretend that you do not know how to swim. I know you; I have heard of your tricks."

"You have heard of my tricks?" said the astonished curé.

"Did you not, eleven months ago, save a child from drowning?"

"Ah! Jean, a knowledge of swimming was not necessary to—"

"To reascend the current with one hand, and support an unconscious child with the other. Pretend what you please, but why conceal that from your friends?"

"I did not conceal it; but why should I come to tell it to you? If the poor child and the mother had needed anything, certainly I would have spoken of them to Nicole, as I have often done in favor of others in want, for I always obtained from her more than I asked, she is so kind and charitable; it is true you give her the example, Jean."

"No matter, no matter, Cousin Nicolas," exclaimed Jean Bart, to interrupt the praises bestowed upon himself and his wife. "It is

true that at the time of my marriage and after my last cruises in 1679, I passed with you the happiest days of my life. Therefore twenty years hence, if God preserves my life so long and Nicole is willing, I will buy a piece of land in your parish, I will build a house near your presbytery and retire there to rest, to plant my cabbages as people say."

"And why not before twenty years have passed?" asked Nicole. "We are in comfortable circumstances, and your prizes have sufficiently enriched us."

"Yes, but what of our boy?" said Jean Bart, pointing to his son. "Who will teach him to splice a rope? Is not his name Cornille Bart? Were not his father, his grandfather, his great-grandfather corsairs? Do you wish him to learn the nautical art on the flat boat of Cousin Nicolas?"

"Jean is right," said the priest. "Little Cornille has a fine career before him, Nicole, and if it is only for his child's sake Jean should not so soon abandon the sea; besides a man of thirty with a family should not be thinking of repose. And, Jean, do

not be offended by my frankness, but it seems to me that you do not take sufficient care of your interests. For instance, when the king was here lately, you should have been presented to his Majesty or at least to his minister."

"And for what purpose?"

"Well, to thank him for the gold chain presented you in 1676, and for the commission of lieutenant sent you last year."

"Thank him for the chain! What use was there in doing that? I earned it, I did not ask for it. My idea is that we return thanks only for things which we have not earned and for which we ask. As to the commission of lieutenant, I was too little pleased to express my gratitude and I explained my feelings candidly to the Marshal d'Estrades."

"Admitting that you were not required to give thanks, at least you could have paid your respects to his Majesty."

"In the first place, Cousin Nicolas, I do not know how to pay my respects to any one; and then, if the king wished to see me, he could easily have said so."

"He could easily have said so!" exclaimed the good priest, stupefied by the deliberate manner of his cousin.

"Yes, I repeat, he could have said so! I would have gone, I would have said: 'Well, sire, what do you want?' and thus the affair would have been finished."

"You would have said to his Majesty: '*What do you want, sire?*'" replied the curé, more and more astonished; for Jean Bart's manner expressed such artless and sincere confidence, that, without doubt, he would have acted as he said.

"Certainly," answered Jean Bart; "what astonishes you in that? Suppose a gentleman desires to speak to me; I go to him and say: 'What do you want, sir?' Now put sire instead of sir, and that makes: '*What do you want, sire?*' Where is the difficulty?"

"Would you really, Jean, speak in that manner to the king without trembling? It seems to me that if I was in the presence of his Majesty, or of his Eminence, the Archbishop of Paris, or even of the vicar-general, I should be more dead than alive."

"I should not."

"You would not? Listen to me, Jean, if you were face to face with the king as you and I now are, admit that you would be troubled, disturbed. That is in human nature; you cannot deny it. I am sure that in presence of one far below the king, for instance, a simple lord of the court, you would be intimidated."

"A lord of the court! A lord intimidate me! Sauret can tell you that in 1666 I was mate on board a caravelle, and the captain being absent on business, I was in command of the boat, and it became my duty to take on board three of the lords of whom you speak, lords of the highest rank. I was to conduct them to the great Ruyter; ask Sauret if I was the least afraid of those courtiers."

"Well, it may be as you say with simple courtiers, but the king, Jean Bart, the king!"

"The king! Is the king a famous seaman that he should intimidate me?"

"What do you mean?"

"In sober earnest, Cousin Nicolas, how

could you expect me to feel any emotion when speaking to an individual, who previous to coming to Dunkirk, had never even seen a man-of-war, whilst the sea was my cradle?"

"You are certainly jesting," said the priest, who could not comprehend the singular reasoning of Jean Bart; "the king is not a sailor, therefore he does not intimidate you!"

"No, no, I repeat no a thousand times; but a famous mariner who is not a king intimidates me. Perhaps I am wrong, but such is my nature."

"It is indeed extraordinary," said the priest.

"The first time, Cousin Nicolas, that I saw the great Ruyter, I was wholly disconcerted; my heart palpitated. I was of the same profession and he knew a thousand thousand times more than I did. I am now fifteen years older, and yet I am sure that in his presence I should be equally moved, had he not been killed by the old Duquesne, who is a man fitted to excite similar emotions. But why be troubled before a king

or a lord? They could no more command a ship than I could a kingdom. We are quits."

"But, Jean, the king commands you, the minister commands you."

"Yes, it is true, they command me and I obey, but it is their duty to command, it is mine to obey; but when I have obeyed them, I say again there is no cause for intimidation."

"I confess I cannot comprehend you."

"Ah! Cousin Nicholas," said Mme. Bart, "if you only knew how abruptly he lately spoke to Marshal d'Estrades."

"I suppose you would be afraid of him also, Cousin Nicolas," said Jean Bart.

"Not exactly afraid, Jean; but he is so proud and haughty, that the very sight of him would make me tremble," answered the poor priest, to whom the adventure of the stove had not yet happened.

"I did not tremble in the least; I will tell you what passed. Two months ago he met me on the pier where I was walking while smoking my pipe; he was with the superintendent, Mr. Descluseaux. 'There

is Captain Bart,' said the superintendent to the marshal. Then Mr. d'Estrades addressed me.

"'Good morning, Mr. Bart.'

"'Good morning, sir.'

"'Are you willing, Mr. Bart, to accept the position of lieutenant on board a ship of his Majesty?'

"'No, sir.'

"'And yet his Majesty did you the honor, Mr. Bart, to send you the commission of lieutenant.'

"'That is true, sir.'

"'And you are not willing to serve his Majesty?'

"'As lieutenant, no; as captain, yes.'."

"Did you say that to Marshal d'Estrades?"

"Nicole can tell you that I did; I related the conversation to her as soon as I returned."

"It is really true, Cousin Nicolas," said Mme. Bart, shaking her head.

"Then the marshal asked: 'Why do you not wish to serve as lieutenant?'

"'Because I like to be free and do as I please on the deck of my own ship.'

"'But, Mr. Bart, you will, perhaps, be a captain in a year's time.'

"'But, sir, I am a captain now.'

"'But consider, Mr. Bart, the captain of a royal vessel.'

"'But, sir, consider, the captain of a privateer of Dunkirk!'

"During this time, Cousin Nicolas," added Jean Bart, laughing at the recollection of the scene, "the superintendent, Descluseaux, was winking at me and pulling me by the sleeve. At last the marshal appeared much displeased, and said: 'But, Mr. Bart, suppose we force you to serve?'

"'Force me to serve, me!'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'The one who could boast of having made me serve against my will must have strong fists.'"

"But," said the priest in alarm, "that sufficed to have you imprisoned."

"And that is precisely what he threatened, Cousin Nicolas."

"'Mr. Bart,' answered the marshal, 'there are prisons in Dunkirk, and soldiers to conduct thither insubsordinate subjects.'

"'Is that what you call forcing me to serve?'

"'Suppose, Mr. Bart, that the king himself on his next visit should give you the order?'

"'Well, sir, I should say to him, No.'

"'Would you say that to His Majesty, Mr. Bart?'

"'Yes, sir, just as I say it to you, and I should tell him moreover: "Sire, you are wrong; I am a good privateer-captain, and without any trouble or expense to you, I pay to you the third, fourth, or tenth part of the value of my prizes; I capture for you ships and cannon; I beat the English and Dutch, which is a blessing; either leave me to my trade or give me one of your frigates to command: then I shall be of some advantage to you; as lieutenant I can be of no service."'

"Oh, if you could have seen the marshal and superintendent! Then Mr. d'Estrades said:

"'I was joking, Mr. Bart. His Majesty has never forced any one, for his subjects esteem it an honor to serve him.'

"He turned upon his heel and walked off, and I very tranquilly returned home and related to Nicole all that had passed."

"But that was enough to have deprived you of any favor in the future," said Nicolas in consternation. "How fortunate for you that you were not talking with the Marquis de Seignelay, who is said to be so high-tempered!"

"Well, if the Marquis de Seignelay had flown into a passion, I should have taken a stand and kept to it."

"But, Jean, consider that he is a minister and the son of a minister."

"But consider, Cousin Nicolas, a Bart, the son of Cornille Bart, and the grandson of François Bart!"

"But he is powerful."

"So am I. Listen, Cousin Nicolas. If war should be declared to-morrow, I wager that were I to get Sauret to write the following words: *Captain Jean Bart wishes to know what privateer captains are willing to cruise with him*, in twenty-four hours I should have twelve or fifteen well armed vessels, with crews of fine sailors, all ready

at a signal from me to risk their lives. You see, Cousin Nicolas, that one who can do that may well laugh at ministers, even though they be sons and fathers of ministers."

The good curé, persuaded that he could not convince Jean Bart, smiled but sighed as he said:

"Adieu, Cousin Bart, I shall never see you an admiral."

"It is most probable that you never will, particularly if in order to reach that grade I should be obliged to pay court to those in power; but I do not desire the rank."

"Adieu, my dear friends; I hope to see you soon at Drinkam," said the good priest, as he parted affectionately with Jean Bart and Nicole.

CHAPTER VI.

JEAN BART IS APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF A FRIGATE WITH THE TITLE OF LIEUTENANT—HIS BATTLE ON BOARD LA RAILLEUSE—THE MANNER IN WHICH HE OVERCAME HIS SON'S FEAR—COMMENCEMENT OF HIS CRUISES IN THE NORTH SEA—THE CHEVALIER FORBIN—COMBAT WITH THE ENGLISH—JEAN BART AND FORBIN ARE MADE PRISONERS—THEIR ESCAPE.

JEAN BART, as we have seen, was at thirty years of age a simple privateer-captain, exercising, it is true, a great influence over the other captains of Dunkirk, but not in the least suspecting the position and renown which awaited him. As he himself tells us, his highest ambition was to amass a moderate but independent fortune, which would enable him to end his days peacefully on a small property which he contemplated purchasing near the venerable curé

of Drinkam, and to see his son a captain like his ancestors.

"Unfortunately for Jean Bart," says one of his biographers, "this obscure and tranquil retreat, which he anticipated as the end of a life of peril, this happiness so desired was but a dream. Those terrible words of Bossuet: march! march! apply most implacably to men whose genius brings them before the world; for, once lifted above the level of the unknown multitude, they yield to an irresistible impulse; then events, favor, ambition, a point of honor, the pride of families, and often duty, bears them ever on in a rapid, glorious career, but one always active and troubled. Therefore nearly all those great men, whose simple instincts tend to repose, die casting a glance of despairing regret upon that setting horizon of their life which they had pictured to themselves so pure, calm, and serene.

By a remarkable singularity, his aversion to pay court to the great, his want of deference to high rank, instead of injuring Jean Bart's advancement, attracted the attention

of Colbert, a minister not only quick in the discernment of character, but skilful in employing men according to their talents. Therefore, far from being displeased by the account given by Marshal d'Estrades of Jean Bart's refusal to serve as a lieutenant in the royal marines, and his determination to accept no position unless he were placed in command, Colbert understood the benefit to be derived from such a man, and he acquiesced in his desire. The following year, 1681, Jean Bart was appointed to the command of two frigates, one of thirty and the other of eighteen guns, destined to operate against the pirates of Salé.

Although chief in command, his title of lieutenant was not changed, the only instance on record at the time of an officer of that grade being charged with such a mission.

Jean Bart left Dunkirk April 17, 1681. On June 30, he met near the coast of Portugal two piratical vessels from Salé of twenty and twenty-four guns; he immediately gave them chase. One of them stood towards an English squadron and was protected by

their flag. The other under full sail made for the coast of Algarve. Jean Bart pursued it, and forced it to run aground. On this ship were three hundred Moors, who reached the shore and were taken by the Portuguese. Jean Bart claimed them as his prisoners, but was told that they could be surrendered to him only upon an order from the Prince Regent of Portugal. Jean Bart dispatched his lieutenant to Lisbon, where, after an interview with the French ambassador near that court he obtained the necessary order to convey the Moors to Lisbon, whither Jean Bart went to receive them. Among the number was the son of the governor of Salé, and twelve of the principal inhabitants of the city, for whose ransom a large amount was paid. After cruising a year in the Mediterranean without effecting anything else, Jean Bart returned to Dunkirk.

As peace existed between France and the other European powers, Jean Bart recommenced to run his ship as a merchantman in the Baltic Sea and English Channel.

In 1685 he was appointed captain of a

frigate, and cruised in the Mediterranean about two years, returning to Dunkirk in 1687.

In 1688, in consequence of the revolution which had transferred the throne from James II., the ally of Louis XIV., to William of Orange, Stadtholder of Holland, France declared war against England and Holland. When this war was imminent, the Marshal de Seignelay, the son and successor of Colbert, in the office of Minister of the Navy, wrote to the superintendent at Dunkirk:

"The king has directed me, in order to set the example to others, to arm privateers on my own account as soon as the war commences. Mr. Louvois and myself conjointly design to fit out a vessel at Dunkirk, and I intend to equip another in conjunction with Mr. de Croissy. I give you timely notice, that you may have the opportunity of selecting the two best ships. Inform me also what captains you consider the most suitable to take command of the vessels."

The superintendent naturally replied that no one was better fitted for the position than Jean Bart, and he designated for the

purpose the frigate *la Railleuse*, of thirty guns. In consequence, Jean Bart received the appointment and embarked on *la Railleuse*, taking with him his son, then about twelve years of age, who had cruised with his father the preceding year.

The day after his departure from Dunkirk, Jean Bart perceived a Dutch vessel, to which he immediately gave chase. Judging that he designed to board her, she saved her fire, and, by a rapid manœuvre, after feigning to await *la Railleuse*, she poured a broadside upon the frigate.

Little Cornille Bart was under fire for the first time. He was on the stern near his father when the enemy discharged their cannon. The effect was terrible; eleven men fell dead or wounded, and a bullet rebounding lodged itself in the caisson, near which were Jean Bart and his son.

The poor child, hearing the whistling of this storm of balls, turned pale, as, in 1666, his father had turned pale in his first battle under Ruyter; then, yielding to the involuntary instinct of self-preservation, he turned to run away.

Jean Bart, who was watching his movements with intense anxiety, saw it, caught him by the arm, and said, laughing: "These are the sugar plums of your baptism as a cruiser, my little Cornille. You need not stoop to pick them up; others will come."

The child looked at him without seeing him: his vision was indistinct, his cheeks blanched, the sweat fell in drops from his fair hair upon his temples, and his knees knocked together.

Alarmed by these symptoms, Jean Bart was *afraid* for his son, as Sauret had formerly been *afraid* for him: "This is nothing, my dear little Cornille," resumed Jean Bart, tenderly embracing his son, and seating him by his side, "I assure you it is nothing; balls only strike cowards, and as neither you nor I are cowards, we need not mind them."

At that moment Peter Mallé, the lieutenant, approached to ask Jean Bart if he should order the men to fire; for the Dutch ship, having turned about, was coming upon *la Railleuse*.

"No, not yet; order preparations to be

made for boarding. We will await these beer drinkers until we are deck to deck, and once there, old Peter, open fire, but close; hand to hand, in the manner of our Dunkirk boys, *let the wad of our guns close the mouths of their cannons and serve as a plaster.* That is the way, is it not, my brave little Cornille?"

At that instant the Dutch ship, being within half range of the guns of *la Railleuse*, deviated slightly from the line, and again the balls whistled through the rigging, doing but little damage, carrying off a man on the stern.

Cornille Bart was unable to surmount his terror. He cast himself upon the deck, and cried: "Have mercy upon me, father, I am afraid; I shall die."

At this entreaty, Jean Bart cast upon his son a heart-rending glance. In one second a thousand contending thoughts, furious, desperate, expressed themselves upon his face like a thunder-storm—but he must act at once.

While the unhappy child crouched at his father's feet, his frigate was about to board

the enemy; his crew were silently observing him. Then Jean Bart made a fearful decision; grasping a line, and calling Peter Mallé to help aid him, he lifted his son and bound him to the mizzen-mast, standing upright and facing the enemy. Then he cried out: "Fire! fire on all sides!"

The broadside opened as they came up with the Dutch.

"Board!" cried Jean Bart, in a voice of thunder, and, at the same moment he cast upon his son a look of indescribable anguish and shame. Oh, what happiness! the child was still pale, but his head was proudly erect, his eyes sparkled with courage, and, extending his hands to his father, he exclaimed: "Untie me, father, I am not afraid now!"

The enemy, unable to hold out, were at that moment lowering their flag.

Later, when speaking of the day on which his paternal heart had been so cruelly tried, Jean Bart said: "I gained two victories—one over the Dutch, the other over the fear which possessed my son. The latter cost

me more, and made me far happier than the former."

We have now arrived at the period when Jean Bart rendered the most important services to France by his advantageous and perilous cruises in the seas of the North, and those bathing the coasts of England, latitudes with which he was perfectly familiar, having frequently navigated them as sailor, master, or captain, and latitudes in which he could inflict an enormous and irreparable injury upon the English and Dutch commerce.

Before entering upon an account of those actions, we must speak of a new companion-in-arms sent to Jean Bart by the minister, Seignelay. He was not a simple sailor, a man of the people like himself, and his old friend, the brave Gaspard Keyser; he was a nobleman of high birth, Mr. de Forbin, Count de Janson, lieutenant, royal navy.

History is silent as to the circumstances which separated the two friends, Bart and Keyser. After 1688 we lose all trace of Keyser, with one exception. Mention is

made in the beginning of 1689 of a prize taken by him; then his name disappears, he passes into oblivion, while Jean Bart's becomes more and more famous.

But let us return to Claude de Forbin, Count de Janson. He was the youngest of a numerous family belonging to the highest nobility of Provence, and was born August 6, 1656, at Gardenne, near Aix. Destined by his mother to the ecclesiastical state, he soon gave evidence of a character so violent, passionate and imperious that his mother permitted him to enter the royal navy. His first service was in the Mediterranean, under the orders of Marshal de Vivonne. After peace was concluded in 1678, he engaged in a company of musqueteers. Having become involved in great difficulties by his natural impetuosity, he accompanied the Count d'Estrées, in the capacity of midshipman, to the coasts of America, where he learned the nautical art; in 1682 he was present, under the command of Duquesne, at the bombardment of Algiers. He served bravely in these campaigns but without obtaining promotion. In 1683 he was

nominated lieutenant, and sent on a frigate to Lisbon with William de Torcy, who went as envoy to congratulate Don Pedro upon his accession to the throne of Portugal.

After his return from Lisbon, Forbin accompanied to Siam the embassy sent to that country by Louis XIV.

He was absent two years, having experienced many disasters. It was then that the minister, desiring to equip two vessels at Dunkirk and entrust the command of them to two intrepid seamen, concluded that Forbin would be a suitable person to associate in the undertaking with Jean Bart. Forbin, in consequence, was appointed to go to Dunkirk and take command of a frigate, and to obey the orders and directions given by Jean Bart.

It would be difficult to find two men so entirely unlike. In personal appearance Forbin united all the qualities which characterize a soldier: his air was noble; he was quick, vivacious, vigilant; his form was elegant, and he had distinguished himself honorably in the exercises of the Academy;

his dark complexion, his decided eyebrows, black eyes, his finely-chiselled lips, all accorded wonderfully with the imperturbable audacity of his character; to a natural impatience amounting to exasperation under the least contradiction, were united an incurable envy and jealous rivalry against all the seamen of his time. In his opinion, Tourville was timid; Coëtlogon, silly; Chateau-Renault, stupid; Langerou, a milksop; Duguay-Trouin, an ignorant sailor, and Jean Bart, a clown who owed his reputation to his roughness; as to himself, Forbin, he modestly asserted that *if he were allowed freedom of action, he would become on the sea what Turenne was on land.*

With all these faults, Forbin was courageous and resolute, and his fiery and often blind intrepidity had led him to the performance of several brilliant exploits; he moreover manœuvred well and understood the construction of vessels.

As to his morals, they were detestable; his love of gambling and dissipation of every kind, and, above all, his impiety, made him in a measure the precursor of the prof-

ligates who disgraced the regency of the Duke of Orleans.

When we picture to ourselves this nobleman, corrupt, disdainful, irreligious, but intelligent and brave, brought into contact with Jean Bart, simple, moral, deeply penetrated with religious sentiment, living, after a cruise, as a peaceful citizen in the midst of his family, the mind naturally dwells upon the thousand contrarieties which must have arisen from the association of two men so dissimilar.

Contemporary documents are silent upon the relations existing between them, with the exception of an account given in a letter from Mr. Boursin to Mr. de Valincourt of a scene which occurred at Dunkirk.

According to the letter, the Chevalier de Forbin (such was his title at that time), with his well-known self-sufficiency and haughtiness, had commenced by assuming a very sarcastic manner towards Jean Bart (this was previous to their first cruise); then encouraged by the unconcern of the corsair, who had scarcely noticed the disguised insolence of his new companion, who did not

wish too openly to *amuse himself with the bear*, as he called Jean Bart, Forbin pushed things so far, that Mr. Patoulet, superintendent of marine at Dunkirk, and particularly attached to Jean Bart, drew his attention to Forbin's rudeness and put him on his guard.

Once warned, Jean Bart, who had a fund of good sense and great natural delicacy of feeling, waited for the first impertinence of the chevalier which, although glossed over and disguised, was soon aimed at him in presence of many officers.

Jean Bart, continuing to smoke his pipe, slowly approached Forbin and said to him with perfect calmness :

"You have sense, Chevalier, and I, I am stupid."

"Ah, Mr. Bart! ah!" said Forbin, saluting him with mock humility.

Jean, without betraying the least emotion added :

"Well, although stupid, I am about to teach you one thing, Chevalier."

"Enchanted, Mr. Bart, to receive your lessons, from which, no doubt, I shall derive great advantage."

Jean Bart did not appear to comprehend the sarcasm, and replied with a coolness that disconcerted Forbin:

"You must know, Chevalier, that the poor mariners of Dunkirk understand but two ways of proceeding: either to treat each other frankly and cordially as good sailors, or to take places on opposing decks."

"On opposing decks! You have couched a metaphor under a charming sailor phrase."

"In other words," pursued Jean Bart with the same indifference and still smoking his pipe, "in other words we are either friends or enemies, cordially grasping hands, or as frankly wielding the sword. Do you understand me better now?"

"Perfectly, Mr. Bart," said Forbin fiercely, "perfectly; that is a language comprehended in the Levant as well as at Ponant, believe me."

"I believe you, Chevalier, and therefore, be pleased to tell me now as a man of honor whether you wish to be my friend or my enemy, and be quick about it, for I have not time to pass the day in unravelling the meaning of your words."

Forbin made a movement betraying the natural violence of his disposition ; he, however, restrained himself, and whether he followed a noble impulse, or reflected that his previous conduct had been unbecoming, and that instead of jeering Jean Bart in covered speech he should have, at least, attacked him openly, an attack wholly unjustifiable, the odium of which would have rested on himself, Forbin extended his hand and said :

" I wish to be your friend and sailor, Mr. Bart, and I shall be proud of it. If my words have offended you, I retract them."

" Let us speak no more of it, Chevalier," said Jean Bart, cordially pressing the hand extended by Forbin. " When we are once at sea you will discover that the son of my father is your faithful sailor."

Notwithstanding this reconciliation, perfectly sincere on Jean Bart's part, Forbin in his *Memoirs* depreciates this great man as far as was in his power, and never mentions him without betraying jealousy and ill-humor.

Shortly after the incident related above, Jean Bart and Forbin were ordered in concert upon an expedition, a perilous enterprise as we may judge from the letter forwarded by the Marquis de Seignelay to Mr. Patoulet, superintendent at Dunkirk. It bears date February 12, 1689, and is as follows:

"I wrote you on the 7th inst to equip the frigate *la Railleuse* under the command of Sieur Bart, to convey promptly to Brest the thirty thousand pounds of powder which are at Calais, with thirty thousand shot and matches. To this frigate join the *Serpent*, commanded by Chevalier Forbin. These two vessels will receive the above mentioned munitions, and then proceed to Havre to ship those deposited for them at that port by Mr. de Louvigny. I have made known to Sieur Bart, *that there are off Plymouth six Dutch frigates under the command of Vice-Admiral Van Der Putten, and in the channel six English ships, that he may avoid them.* His Majesty however desires him to give chase to the Dutch Corsairs,

which are in great numbers near the coasts of France, and to endeavor to capture some of them."

Thus there was question of transporting from Calais to Brest thirty thousand pounds of powder, and while doing so to avoid, or if circumstances required, to fight twelve frigates cruising in the channel without taking into account the privateers he was to capture. The habitual danger of war was in this case increased by the necessity of combating over a volcano, of attacking the enemy with thirty thousand pounds of powder under their feet. The choice of Jean Bart for such an expedition proves the extent of the reliance placed upon his intrepidity, coolness, experience, and particularly upon his decision, so clear and rapid under difficult circumstances and unforeseen complications.

Jean Bart and Forbin manœuvred so skilfully that they arrived at Havre after having captured two ships on the way; Forbin took a Spanish vessel loaded with Brazilian woods, and Jean Bart another

Spanish boat of four hundred tons, freighted with gold dust, bags of silver and pepper. Receiving at Havre a new cargo of munitions of war, they accomplished without obstacle the passage to Brest, where they unloaded and returned to Havre to await orders.

During this time of repose at Havre, Jean Bart laid before Seignelay a project he had long meditated: it was an expedition having for its object the destruction of the Dutch commerce in the North Sea. His idea was to form a squadron composed of light frigates, fast sailers, manned with a numerous and well disciplined crew, which he himself would command. He based the success of his plan upon his practical knowledge of the navigation of that sea, of the times of departure and arrival of the merchantmen, etc. Seignelay did not enter into his views; they were adopted later by Pontchartrain, and as we shall see with the happiest results.

In the mean time Jean Bart and Forbin were ordered by the king to convoy fourteen merchantmen from Havre to Brest.

They left Havre May 20, 1689. On the 22d, they met in the channel two English vessels, one of forty-eight, the other of forty-two guns. Jean Bart, commanding the escort, decided to make an immediate attack, in order to occupy the enemy whilst the ships could make good their escape; he singled out the vessel of forty-eight guns, ordering the Count de Forbin to support him, and directing three of the best armed merchantmen to attack the other English ship. He then advanced against the English vessel for the purpose of boarding her; but just at that moment the wind subsided, and he failed in the attempt. The Chevalier de Forbin was more fortunate, and Jean Bart's plan would have been successful if the three merchantmen had not fled instead of joining in the attack as directed.

Being thus left without an opponent, this vessel turned against the frigates of Bart and Forbin. The engagement was terrific; after a combat of two hours, Bart and Forbin, being wounded, their frigates disabled and a hundred and fifty of their crew

either killed or wounded, were forced to surrender.

The English lost so many men, particularly officers, in this action that during the combat the command devolved upon the boatswain's mate, Robert Small, who, in recompense for his bravery, was appointed captain of a frigate by King William.

The merchant vessels were saved and reached their destination; but Jean Bart and Forbin, with their disabled frigates, were conveyed to Plymouth, and the two captains, held as prisoners of war, were immured in a strong castle on the sea-shore.

Jean Bart was only slightly wounded; Forbin, more seriously hurt. After eleven days of captivity a strange circumstance led to their liberation. A Dutch trading-ship, commanded by a cousin of Jean Bart, Gaspard Bart, was so disabled by a gale in the channel that Gaspard was forced to put into the port of Plymouth. Learning there that Jean was a prisoner, he asked and obtained the permission to visit him; after three interviews a plan of escape was arranged. A French surgeon attending

Bart and Forbin was informed of their design, and two English ship-boys, who served the prisoners, were bribed to aid and accompany them. By means of a file furnished by Gaspard, Jean sawed asunder the bars of the prison window, and twenty-two days after the fatal combat, the boys informed Jean Bart that, having found an intoxicated boatman asleep in his boat, they had removed him to another and concealed his in a retired creek.

The surgeon, who in virtue of his office could leave the fortress at pleasure, engaged to convey provisions, a mariners' compass, arms, and ammunition to the boat, and on June 12, a dark and stormy night, Jean Bart, Forbin, the physician, and the two boys, having removed the bars from the window, let themselves down by means of their sheets and embarked in the boat. As they were leaving the harbor, they were hailed and interrogated by a boat stationed as sentinel; Jean Bart, who spoke English fluently, replied that they were fishermen, and in a few minutes they were out at sea.

The night was stormy, the wind high,

and they were obliged to cross the channel in a row-boat without deck or sails. As Forbin was still suffering from his wound, he took the helm; Jean Bart and the surgeon, relieved by the two ship-boys, rowed the boat.

Fortunately the wind lulled a few hours after their departure, and the fugitives arrived near Saint-Malo in Normandy, after a voyage of two days and a night.

The manner in which Jean Bart had failed in his attack upon the two English frigates, far from diminishing his reputation for bravery, contributed to increase it. The merchantmen saved by his devotion had everywhere extolled his intrepidity, and the following letter is evidence that Seignelay, who was ignorant of Jean Bart's escape, took active measures to effect his exchange. He wrote as follows to the superintendent of marine at Dunkirk:

"I received on the 5th inst. with your letter a list of the prisoners of Dunkirk. I wrote to Mr. Louvigny to act in concert with you for the exchange of Sieur Bart

and Chevalier Forbin, *but particularly of Sieur Bart*, and I wish you to communicate with him on this subject. I have authorized him to offer two clerks of the English custom-house, recently brought to Dieppe; should that offer be rejected, his Majesty will give in exchange the captain of a Dutch man-of-war."

The escape effected by Jean Bart rendered the above arrangement useless, but it added to his reputation. The king was so much pleased that on June 25th he appointed Bart and Forbin captains.

CHAPTER VII.

JEAN BART IS APPOINTED CAPTAIN OF A FRIGATE, AND COMMANDS A SQUADRON—HIS MOST REMARKABLE EXPLOITS—HIS VISIT TO THE COURT—THE MEANS HE PROPOSED TO PREVENT THE PRINCE DE CONTI FROM BEING TAKEN PRISONER—LAST CRUISE OF JEAN BART—HIS DEATH.

JEAN BART'S name was daily becoming more and more famous and seemed to presage a brilliant future; this was, however, clouded by domestic sorrows. His old companion, his mentor, his sailor, Sauret, died. This loss, although it touched him deeply, was not unforeseen, as the old sailor had attained an advanced age and had become quite infirm in consequence of former wounds, and he owed the prolongation of his life to the affectionate attentions bestowed upon him in Jean Bart's house. But this death was followed by another, wholly

unexpected and deeply painful to his loving heart. His gentle, devoted wife, the good Nicole, died in the prime of life, when youth and good health seemed to promise a long future. History has preserved no details of the cause or the date of her death; all we know is that Jean Bart was a widower when a prisoner in England, and that October 13, 1689, he married, with the approbation of the king, Marie Tughe, daughter of a counsellor of Parliament, of high social rank at Dunkirk. After his marriage he left the old house in Church Street and occupied a handsome house in Bac Street.

Two months after his marriage we find Jean Bart again at sea. Commanding a frigate, with two others under his orders, he captured from the 19th to the 25th of December six ships.

In 1690, he made the campaign under Château-Renault. In July, he returned to Dunkirk and was present at the baptism of his daughter Jeanne-Marie. The following year he had a second daughter named Madeleine-Françoise.

That same year, 1691, Jean Bart, after a campaign under Tourville, renewed to Mr. de Pontchartrain, the request made to Seignelay to form a squadron of light vessels to harass the enemy's commerce in the North Sea. His proposition was finally accepted and Jean Bart entered actively into the execution of his plan.

In a short time he had armed seven frigates of different sizes, the largest of which carried forty guns, and the smallest, twenty. But the difficulty did not consist in arming a squadron, it lay in carrying it out of the port ; for, at that time, Dunkirk was blockaded by a combined English and Dutch fleet composed of thirty-seven men-of-war, several of which carried sixty guns. He, however, successfully effected this on the night of July 25th, 26th. The following extract from the letter of the superintendent at Dunkirk gives an account of the exploit to the Minister :

" DUNKIRK, July 25, 1691.

" I inform you of the passage of Mr. Bart's squadron last night through thirty-seven of the enemy's vessels, of which eigh-

teen or twenty are now pursuing him, uselessly, I am sure.

"Mr. Bart was nearly a fortnight in the harbor and the enemy did not see fit to attack him; the vessels of his squadron (the largest carried only forty guns,) *sailed from the port with their lint stocks in their hands.*

"I do not know the force of the enemy's vessels occupying the passes of the harbor; there are some of sixty and eighty guns."

Signed: "PATOULET."

The announcement of this audacious exploit excited a commotion, not only in the city of Dunkirk and the maritime population of the shore, but it aroused the ministers and the court. The result of the rash undertaking was anxiously awaited; notwithstanding the confidence expressed by Patoulet, all feared that Bart had been overtaken by the many boats in pursuit of him.

But their fears were groundless. The English were foiled; at daybreak he was out of sight. Towards evening he espied six ships taking the same route as himself; he sent to reconnoitre, and discovered that

there were four English vessels richly freighted for Russia escorted by two men-of-war, one of forty, the other of sixty guns. He kept close to them during the night, attacked one at day-dawn, and after an hour's fight forced her to lower her flag; he easily obtained possession of the other man-of-war and the merchantmen. These prizes were sent to Bergen, in Sweden, a neutral port, to remain until they could be taken to France. A few days later he came upon a Dutch fleet returning from fishing, escorted by two ships of forty guns; Jean Bart attacked, boarded them, took several fishing-boats, and conveyed them himself to Bergen, where he put to for repairs in consequence of injuries sustained in the recent battle.

One day when walking in the city, he was addressed by the captain of an English privateer, who inquired if he was not Captain Jean Bart.

"Yes," he replied; "what do you wish?"

"I have long sought you," answered the Englishman; "I would like to meet you in arms."

"I will meet you with pleasure," said Jean Bart; "as soon as the repairs of my ship are completed, we will fight on the open sea."

When on the point of leaving the port, the Englishman invited him to breakfast on board of his vessel.

"Enemies like ourselves," replied Jean Bart, "should hold intercourse only with cannon balls."

The Englishman urged, insisted, until at last, Jean Bart, relying upon the loyalty of a sailor, accepted the invitation.

After breakfast, the English captain declared to him that he had sworn to take him back to Plymouth, dead or alive, and that he was his prisoner. Jean Bart, outraged by such perfidy and baseness, sprang, pistol in hand, towards some barrels of gunpowder which had not been removed from the deck, and threatened to blow up the ship, if he were not immediately liberated. At the sight of this daring act the whole crew were silent from terror. The French sailors, who were at a short distance, hearing the indignant cry of their captain, flew

to his defence, and regardless of the neutrality of the port, they boarded and sank the English vessel.

Jean Bart signalized himself still more during this campaign by a large number of prizes valued at a million livres.

After the fatal day of la Hogue, May 29, 1692, in which our forces were so terribly worsted, the enemy blockaded our ports more closely, and a fleet of twenty-two vessels were cruising before Dunkirk. On October 7, Jean Bart made, and more boldly than the preceding year, a sortie from the port in presence of the enemy. This time he had but three frigates and a fire-ship, with which he traversed the hostile fleet without being pursued. The following day he captured four English ships, richly freighted, and sent them to France. Two days afterward he met an English fleet of eighty-six merchantmen, of which he took seven and burned many more; then he cruised along the coast of England, where he did immense damage to the commerce of the allies, who did not anticipate meeting him in those latitudes. He next made a

descent upon England, near Newcastle, where he burned about five hundred houses; a cruel and bloody retaliation for the disasters experienced by our navy elsewhere. Finally, he returned to Dunkirk with prizes valued at 450,000 francs.

In 1693 Jean Bart took part, under the orders of Tourville, in the battle of Lagos, in which the French revenged the disaster of la Hogue upon the squadron and merchant vessels sent from England to Spain, Italy, and the Levant. Eighty-seven trading ships and several men-of-war were captured or burned, and the loss to the allies upon that occasion was estimated at twenty-five million livres. Jean Bart, having separated from the main army, forced six Dutch ships, richly freighted, to run aground near Faro; they were burned.

August 19, 1693, Jean Bart was decorated with the insignia of Chevalier of Saint-Louis. This distinction, so well deserved, seemed an additional stimulus to him to render still more important and useful services to the king and his country.

In 1694 a great famine, consequent upon

the failure of the crops, existed throughout France. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the English, Jean Bart succeeded in introducing into Dunkirk a few small convoys loaded with grain. Soon afterwards he received an order from the minister to fit out six frigates and flutes, in order to facilitate the entry into France of a large fleet conveying provisions from Denmark and Poland. He set sail without delay, but instead of meeting the fleet he expected, he found himself confronted with a squdron of eight Dutch men-of-war, commarded by Rear-Admiral Hidde, who had just captured all the ships laden with grain for France, and was conveying them to a port in Holland. No time was to be lost. Jean Bart, although he had with him only six vessels, inferior to those of the enemy, did not hesitate to attack them. He boarded and took the ship of the rear-admiral, captured two other vessels of war, put to flight the remaining five, and escorted to Dunkirk the entire merchant fleet, composed of sixty-six ships (June 29, 1694).

Jean Bart sent an account of this brilliant

action to the Minister by his son, Cornille Bart, who was engaged in the battle. The young man was rewarded with an appointment in the marine guard, and Jean Bart received letters of nobility with a coat-of-arms.

The arrival of this convoy of grain, so impatiently expected, lowered the price of provisions fifty per cent., and the name of Jean Bart was enthusiastically greeted by the grateful people throughout France.

We may form an idea of the terror with which Jean Bart inspired his enemies by the following extract from the *Holland Gazette* of November 18, 1694.

"As the wind blew from the east on the 15th, the Prince of Orange left this city (la Haye) the 16th, between seven and eight o'clock, A. M. with the intention of embarking at Orange-Polder, but the wind having changed, he was obliged to return here in the evening. The wind was favorable again this morning, but the information received in the mean time has retarded his departure. It appears that Captain Bart, having left Dunkirk on the 13th with five vessels destined, it was said, to cruise

toward the north, came upon our coasts, and finding anchored before an island of Zealand, the Scotch fleet escorted by two ships of war, he attacked it and captured a portion of it; the remainder sought refuge at Gorie and other ports. As the two ships of war have not returned, it is feared that they also have been taken. In consequence, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who commands the squadron sent from England to escort the Prince of Orange, has gone in pursuit of Captain Bart, and the Prince of Orange must await his return before venturing to leave."

Thus William III., King of England, Prince of Orange and Stadtholder of Holland, dares not cross from la Haye to England, because he understands that a privateer-captain of Dunkirk is out on a cruise! Jean Bart, who did not suspect the effect produced by his expedition, must have been amused when reading this article in the *Gazette*.

In 1695 the English and Dutch formed the plan of destroying Dunkirk by bombarding it. They equipped a formidable armament, expended enormous sums, and on

August 4, nine ships of war moored about a league from the city. On the 5th the enemy made no move. On the 6th, Admiral Barklay, commanding the expedition, gave the signal to set sail. More than thirty ships were seen to approach the city, and at noon the whole fleet was moored between the banks; for several days the enemy remained stationary, but on the 11th, at seven o'clock in the morning, the fleet of one hundred and twelve ships entered the harbor. The galiots began to shell the city, but did no damage because of their too great distance; they then moored before the fort on the west, forming a crescent within range of the guns. Jean Bart commanded the fort of Good Hope, the most exposed at the extreme west.

During the whole day the galiots and frigates cannonaded the city, and towards evening sent a fire-ship against the fort of Good Hope; but Jean Bart and his son pointed their cannon with such precision that the ship was sunk before it could cause an explosion. Towards evening the English squadron left Dunkirk, after an ineffectual

bombardment of fifteen hours. The failure of the enterprise was ascribed in a great measure to Jean Bart.

In the spring of 1696, Jean Bart received an order to equip a squadron of seven vessels and a fire-ship to cruise in the channel and the North Sea. This squadron was composed of boats belonging to the royal marine and was commanded by officers of the marine corps, all gentlemen who esteemed it an honor to serve under Jean Bart.

It put to sea in April, and on June 18, it was engaged in a brilliant action with the Dutch fleet composed of a hundred and ten sails, and protected by five frigates. Our readers will, no doubt, be pleased to see the account of the combat as given by Jean Bart himself in a dispatch addressed to the Minister of the Navy on the subject.

"MONSEIGNEUR:—

"After cruising thirty-one days without effecting anything, I came up, on June 18, with a Dutch fleet, which from information furnished me, I had been awaiting for a fortnight. It was composed of a hundred

or a hundred and ten merchantmen escorted by five men-of-war, of which two carried forty-four guns, two, thirty-eight guns, and one, twenty-four. I attacked them immediately, and was so fortunate as to take the five convoys after an obstinate battle, in which I had fifteen men killed, among them Mr. de Carnnères, and fifteen wounded. Each captain will forward you an account of his part in the action and of the conduct of his officers. As to what regards myself individually, after taking the ship of twenty-four pieces by guns and musketry, I captured the flag-ship by boarding, and then proceeded with the squadron against the fleet, which consisted of twenty-five large flutes of five, six, and seven hundred tons, loaded with masts, corn, and tar. I retained of the prizes one ninth as my portion, and the remainder became the share of the other vessels of the squadron. I should have succeeded in destroying the whole fleet, but a Dutch squadron composed of twelve men-of-war was in sight before we commenced the attack, and witnessed the combat. As it was far superior to me in number and size of vessels, and had the wind in its favor, I could not, without greatly compromising his Majesty's arms, undertake so unequal a combat. I was, consequently, obliged to burn all my merchant-prizes, as well as four

vessels-of-war, and the fifth, after spiking the guns and wetting the powder, I gave to convey the prisoners to Holland: these would have seriously incommoded me, had I been forced into another battle, and they would, besides, have consumed my provisions. All the above was executed with diligence and precision.

"As the rest of the fleet was scattered and without convoy, I am confident that the privateers of Dunkirk have completed its destruction. Two of the latter joined me when I commenced the attack; I protected them with all their prizes during the whole time the enemy were pursuing me, that is, until night. I therefore believe that the entire fleet, which was of great importance to the enemy, will be captured by our privateers cruising at the mouth of the Texel from which I was distant only four and a half leagues.

"It remains for me to express the entire satisfaction given by the valor and good conduct of all the captains on this occasion.

"CHEVALIER BART."

Jean Bart makes no mention in this report of the brave conduct of his son, who was among the first to board the Dutch flag-ship. We learn this fact from a long

report of Mr. Vergier, a witness of the combat, addressed to the minister, in which is given in detail all the incidents of this affair. He estimates the loss of the enemy to have amounted to forty vessels, representing a value of, at least, two million crowns.

At the commencement of the following year, 1697, Jean Bart went to the court in obedience to the expressed desire of the king to see him. He was presented by the Chevalier de Forbin, his old companion-in-arms. It appears that this nobleman, naturally sarcastic, had given to his friends a description of Jean Bart not very flattering to him; therefore, when his arrival at Versailles was announced, the courtiers said to each other:

"Let us go see the Chevalier de Forbin leading his bear."

The remark having reached Bart's ears, he said to his friends:

"I am a bear, I admit; but beware of meddling with him; for he has claws and teeth and can use them."

The king received him in the most cordial manner, and treated him with such dis-

tinction as to force the courtiers to conduct themselves respectfully towards him.

After a few general remarks the king said :

" I am pleased, Mr. Bart, to tell you that I have promoted you to the rank of commodore."

" You have done well, sire," replied the sailor with simplicity.

The king could not restrain a smile at this artless reply.

Seeing the king smile, the courtiers laughed aloud, and amid their noisy gayety the words, " rude person, " impertinent, vain simpleton," were heard by Jean Bart. For a moment he was moved, but quickly recovering his self-possession and addressing the king in a calm, respectful manner he said :

" Sire, I am not accustomed to the ways of the court, and I know better how to act than to speak ; if I have committed a fault which excites the mirth of those gentlemen, let them make it known to me, that I may repair it and ask pardon of your Majesty."

" You have committed no fault, Mr. Bart," replied the king very affably, " and

if the gentlemen had understood your remark as well as I did, they would not laughed in so unbecoming a manner."

Then addressing the courtiers in a grave tone which silenced them at once, he said:

"Gentlemen, you misunderstood Mr. Bart; his reply was that of a man who knows the value of his services, and who desires to give me additional proof of it. For several years he has performed the duty of commodore without either the title or authority; such a condition of affairs is hurtful to the service; I have then done well in putting an end to it, for thus this brave mariner will have more facility, in future, in rendering me all the service of which he is capable.* That is what you meant to say, is it not, Mr. Bart?"

---

* This reply of Louis XIV. is contained in substance in the commission appointing him to the rank of commodore. It is as follows:

"Louis, by the Grace of God, etc. Our dear and beloved Chevalier Bart, post-captain, has rendered us for many years services so important, and the prizes he has taken from the enemy with so much valor and good management have been so useful to the well-being of our state, particularly during the scarcity of provisions, that after having given

"Exactly, sire, but I could not express my idea as you have just done."

The king then entered into familiar conversation with him, requesting him to narrate some of his expeditions. Louis XIV. was much pleased with his sprightly recitals, animated by a graphic pantomime, and mingled with maritime metaphors. The king when speaking of an expedition in which he had been surrounded by the enemy, asked him how he had managed to force his way through the fleet.

"Sire," replied Jean Bart, "if those gentlemen will assist me for a few minutes,"

---

him command of diverse squadrons in the seas of the north, in which he acquitted himself to the glory of our arms, it is just to add to the duties of commodore, which he has so honorably fulfilled, the title and advantages dependent upon it; for this reason, we have appointed and we do appoint Chevalier Bart commodore of the province of Flanders in place of the Marquis of Langeron, whom we have made lieutenant-general under the authority of our beloved son, Louis Alexander de Bourbon, Count of Toulouse, Admiral of France, etc."

April 1, 1697.

The rank of admiral was equivalent to field-marshal or brigadier-general of the land forces; a commodore has now the title of rear-admiral.

and he pointed to several who were near him, "I will give you an explanation which you will readily comprehend."

He immediately placed some of these gentlemen in two compact lines, and then said to the king:

"That is very nearly the position occupied by the enemy; I come upon them at full sail. . . . I fire to the starboard. . . . I fire to the larboard . . ." and as he was speaking he rushed into the midst of the courtiers and scattered them, striking furiously with his elbows on the right and left; then returning to his place near the king, he calmly said:

"That is the way I did it, sire, and it was not more difficult."

This time it was the king who laughed aloud, but the courtiers forced only a smile.

Mr. de Forbin whispered to them: "I warned you not to meddle with him."

Jean Bart made a very short stay at Versailles; the etiquette of the court did not suit him and he longed to return to his dear Dunkirk.

Sometime afterwards Jean Bart was

directed to convey to Elsinore in Denmark the Prince de Conti, who had just been elected King of Poland. Mr. de Pontchartrain had ordered six men-of-war to be equipped to assure the passage of the prince; but when Jean Bart was informed of the expedition, he refused the large vessels, desiring only six frigates, because he was more confident of his manœuvres with light boats and fast sailers, as he was to traverse the English and Dutch fleets then blockading the port of Dunkirk.

The mission of Jean Bart was so full of peril, and its success depended so much upon his experience in overcoming the thousand dangers and hazards of a cruise, that it was impossible to give him any instructions, and Mr. de Pontchartrain in consequence simply sent him the king's letter, briefly ordering him to convey the Prince de Conti to Dantzick or to Elsinore.

The prince arrived at Dunkirk September 4, and at midnight on the 6th, the wind and tide being favorable, Jean Bart set sail.

The night was dark, the sea heavy, and Jean Bart closely watched the working of

the boats, whilst the cannoneers, with match in hand, stood near their pieces in the battery of which the port-holes were carefully closed.

On the 7th the light squadron had passed one of the most dangerous points of the cruise in the North Sea ; in the evening it was in sight of Ostend ; on the 8th, about seven o'clock in the morning, the watch from the top-mast announced that three vessels of eighty guns and nine frigates were cruising off the Thames.

At this information Jean Bart betrayed not the least emotion, but quietly took his glass to follow the movements of the enemy whom he could perfectly distinguish. He soon perceived that they were in pursuit of him, and he tranquilly gave the necessary orders.

For four hours the little division of Jean Bart was steadily pursued, but it always preserved its distance, and this experienced sailor had so wisely selected the ships destined for the dangerous enterprise, that all being equally swift, not one fell behind the rest.

At one o'clock in the afternoon, Jean Bart perceived that he had decidedly placed a greater distance between himself and the enemy; at three o'clock they were out of sight.

The Prince de Conti, who had anxiously watched the pursuit of the enemy, exclaimed: "Thank God! we are saved, but we have had a narrow escape, for had they overtaken us we could not have resisted, we would necessarily have been taken prisoners."

"Oh! not at all; that would have been impossible," said Jean Bart.

"Impossible, Mr. Bart? You certainly could have no expectation of contending successfully against a force so far superior to your own?"

"No, Monseigneur; I would, however, have resisted to the best of my ability, but rather than surrender and let my vessel be manned as a naval prize, my son had received orders to fire the powder-room and blow us up."

"What, Mr. Bart!" exclaimed the Prince de Conti, springing from his chair, for he knew Jean Bart was capable of doing what he said.

"I tell you the truth, Monseigneur; never would I have put it in the power of man to say: 'Jean Bart permitted the Prince de Conti to be taken from the deck of his ship,' as the king had ordered me, Monseigneur, not to let you be made prisoner."

"Very well, Mr. Bart, but I beg you, I order you never to employ that means to prevent me from being taken by the enemy."

Two days afterwards the squadron arrived without accident at Elsinore, the Prince de Conti landed, enchanted to have escaped the danger which threatened him. As his coronation as King of Poland did not take place, in consequence of circumstances irrelevant to our subject, the Prince de Conti was obliged to return to France on the same squadron which had conveyed him to Elsinore. This time he had no cause to fear that Jean Bart would make a resolution similar to the one which had so startled him; peace between France, England, Holland and Spain had just been signed at Ryswick, and an end was thus put to the war, which had lasted ten years.

Peace having been declared it seemed as if Jean Bart might at last enjoy the repose he desired and which he had so well earned. But, after passing two years with his family, he received an order in 1702 to cruise with a squadron in the North Sea, although the war called that of the *Spanish Succession*, which had just broken out, could hardly extend to those latitudes.

On his return from one of these cruises, he was attacked with pleurisy, of which he died, April 27, 1702, after receiving at the hands of his cousin, the worthy curé of Drinkam, all the consolations of religion.

We terminate our account of Jean Bart by quoting the letter in which the superintendent at Dunkirk announces his death to the Minister.

"DUNKIRK, APRIL 27, 1702.

"It is with deep sorrow, such as every good Frenchman should feel, that I announce to you the death of Mr. Bart, who died yesterday between three and four o'clock, having been in his agony from the preceding evening. His loss to France is irreparable, on account of his valor, his suc-

cesses, and his great experience in the navigation of the seas of these latitudes and of the North, besides the immense reputation he enjoyed among foreigners even more than among ourselves; the king will have cause to regret him particularly under existing circumstances. He died at fifty-two years of age, having a consummate experience; never was a man more enterprising, nor one more fortunate in the results of his enterprises; he undertook many expeditions which no one else would have dared to attempt. I doubt if, in the future, any sailor will venture to leave Dunkirk with five, six, or seven royal vessels, the port being guarded by thirty or forty of the enemy's ships, an exploit I myself have four or five times seen effected by the deceased Jean Bart."

FINIS.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 030 242 260 6